

AL
CS,
ity
les
et.
ry
m.
dy
et.
rt.
an
ity
ne-
cs,
w,
al,
3).
d,
st
rs
es
AL
nt
m

THE CAMBRIDGE JOURNAL

Editorial Board

D. W. BROGAN, M.A. C. W. GUILLEBAUD, M.A. MICHAEL
OAKESHOTT, M.A. M. POSTAN, M.A. BASIL WILLEY, M.A.

T. F. D. WILLIAMS, M.A.

General Editor: MICHAEL OAKESHOTT, M.A.

VOLUME II NUMBER 6

MARCH 1949

CONTENTS

	PAGE
A STUDY OF YEATS (<i>Conclusion</i>) <i>Graham Hough</i>	323
CROCE AND FASCISM <i>D. Mack Smith</i>	343
VICTOR COUSIN AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY EDUCATION <i>R. R. Bolgar</i>	357
ANDERS SORENSEN VEDEL <i>Henry Steele Commager</i>	369
CORRESPONDENCE	378
BOOK REVIEWS	379

BOWES & BOWES · CAMBRIDGE



THE OXFORD CLASSICAL DICTIONARY

Edited by

M. CARY, J. D. DENNISTON, A. D. NOCK, SIR DAVID
ROSS, H. H. SCULLARD, and J. WIGHT DUFF

Demy 4to, about 1,000 pp. £2. 10s. net

The Oxford Classical Dictionary is designed for the general reader as well as the specialist and is intended to be a scholarly yet readable guide in one volume to all aspects of ancient Greek and Roman civilization. Its range includes Art and Archaeology (with necessary limits), Geography, History, Literature, Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, and Science; and while the majority of articles are concerned with individual persons and things, a special feature of the *Dictionary* is the number of longer articles designed to give a comprehensive survey of the main subjects. A short summary bibliography is given at the end of the principal articles, and there is a brief general bibliography at the end of the book.

The Editors are Professor M. Cary, Mr. J. D. Denniston, Professor A. D. Nock, Sir David Ross, Dr. H. H. Scullard, and the late Professor J. Wight Duff. In the proof stages Professor H. J. Rose acted for Professor Nock and Professor A. Souter for Professor Wight Duff, while Sir Paul Harvey undertook general supervision and final co-ordination.

The articles, apart from those written by the Editors themselves, have been contributed by more than a hundred and fifty leading classical scholars and specialists throughout the world.

(Ready 3rd March)

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

A STUDY OF YEATS¹

GRAHAM HOUGH

III. *The Mask and the Great Wheel*

The chief documents of this period, besides *A Vision*, to which we will turn in a moment, are the prose essay *Per Amica Silentia Lunae*, and the three poems 'Ego Dominus Tuus', 'The Phases of the Moon' and 'The Double Vision of Michael Robartes'. Yeats's mind was much occupied at this time with what might be called the doctrine of the Mask. Many of his ideas seem to come to him initially as purely verbal suggestions, and we can perhaps discern its origin in the much earlier poem 'Put off That Mask of Burning Gold', a dialogue between a lover and his mistress, in which she tries to discover whether it is his real self or his assumed mask that attracted her. Perhaps too we can see traces of it in Yeats's concern with the use of masks and the exclusion of individual character in drama. However that may be, in *Per Amica* he develops the theory that the poet in the act of creation is not seeking his self, but a mask which is his anti-self, the antithesis of all that he is in life.

By the help of an image

I call to my own opposite, summon all

That I have handled least, least looked upon.²

He applies the idea to Keats, who out of poverty and ill-breeding made a world of luxurious beauty; to Dante —

Being mocked by Guido for his lecherous life,

Derided and deriding, driven out

To climb that stair and eat that bitter bread,

He found the unpersuadable justice, he found

The most exalted lady loved by a man.³

And in *Per Amica* he speaks of a friend (evidently Lady Gregory), whose fault was harsh judgment of those who were not in sympathy with her, and who yet wrote comedies in which the worst people seem only naughty children. In the tragic poet there is conflict both with the world and with the self. 'I am always persuaded that he [Dante] celebrated the most pure lady ever sung and the Divine Justice, not merely because death took that lady and Florence banished her singer, but because he had to struggle in his own

¹ The first part of this article, of which this is the conclusion, appeared in the February issue of *The Cambridge Journal*. The complete article forms part of Professor Hough's book *The Last Romantics*, to be published by Duckworth.

² *Collected Poems*, 1924, p. 180.

³ *ibid.*, p. 181.

heart with his unjust anger and his lust.' Compensation, the psychologist would say; and as far as that goes, Yeats would agree; but he would not think that that explained very much. For he sees the mask also as the creative principle: out of the quarrel with the world we make rhetoric, out of the quarrel with the self we make poetry. All creative activity depends on the energy to assume a mask, to be deliberately re-born as something not oneself. Something of the theatrical element, of affectation even, is necessary to all active virtue. When the artist 'found hanging upon some oak of Dodona an ancient mask', painted and re-gilt it to his liking, and at last put it on, he found that 'another's breath came and went within his breath upon the carven lips and that his eyes were upon the instant fixed upon a visionary world'.¹ Both the man of occult learning and the practitioner of vulgar witchcraft are agreed that the other self is a Daemon, that it may be a dead man speaking through the living; and Yeats added for himself that 'the Daemon comes not as like to like but seeking its own opposite, for man and daemon feed the hunger in one another's hearts'. 'Ego Dominus Tuus', in which this doctrine is expressed, is the first of those poems of intense and passionate speculation which are the greatest triumph of Yeats's later style.

It is not evident at first how the doctrine of the mask leads on to Yeats's further religious and metaphysical speculations. But it does so; for the assumption of the mask is an asceticism, a denial of the personal life, and the poet's activity in assuming it is parallel with that of the saint and the hero, though not identical with theirs. The saint seeks the anti-self of the whole world, and renounces the world while it still has power to attract. But the hero finds his mask in defeat, and loves the world until it breaks him; and the poet finds his in disappointment and loves the world until it breaks faith with him. The saint assumes his mask for ever, and puts away the world and reduces his life to a round of customary duties. But the poet only assumes his mask while he is in the act of creation, and when it is all over Dante returns to his chambering; and as for Yeats himself, had he not written years before

All things can tempt me from this craft of verse,
One time it was a woman's face, or worse?

At the end of the first section of *Per Amica* Yeats toys with the idea that the poet, growing old, might be able to keep his mask without new bitterness and new disappointment, to settle down to a tranquil but not unfruitful old age. Then he remembers Wordsworth's fifty years' decay; and is willing after all to 'climb to some waste room and find, forgotten there by youth, some bitter crust'. In fact Yeats's quarrel with himself was to continue for twenty years longer. The

¹ *Essays*, 1924, p. 497.

conflict between an acceptance of the natural world and the denial of it involved in an assumption of the mask is the theme of his greatest verse — 'The Tower' and the two Byzantium poems.

And now, after all attempts to edge round this daunting work, the problem of *A Vision* must be faced: even for the most purely literary of critics, what a great poet regards as the central revelation of his life cannot be irrelevant to his poetry. The book presents us with not one but three incomprehensibles, its geometry, its astrology and its metaphysics. Regarded as coming from beyond this world, its doctrines are presumably not open to sublunary criticism, and I advance no theories about the origin of these or any other psychic communications. Among much that I do not even begin to understand, this mysterious document contains, however, two things which have clearly had much to do with Yeats's poetry — a theory of psychological types, and a theory of history. The theory of psychological types springs from the mask theme of the quite naturally produced *Per Amica*; and an elaborate classification of men is built up on the basis of their combat with themselves and their combat with circumstance. There are twenty-eight types: they may be arranged in a circle and symbolized by the phases of the moon, but this is only an accident of notation. What is more interesting is that this symbolism expresses few ideas of which we have not already had hints in Yeats's earlier work, sometimes very long ago. Those phases in which man remains contentedly involved in nature and those in which he is engaged in the struggle with himself grow progressively more beautiful; until 'at the full of the moon' the body is perfectly moulded by the soul, the result is perfect beauty: and this type is too perfect ever to lie in any earthly cradle; these are the beings whom countrymen meet with terror in the lonely hills, the Sidhe and the Danaans of Yeats's early poetry. The succeeding types are summarized as follows in 'The Phases of the Moon':

The soul remembering its loneliness
Shudders in many cradles; all is changed,
It would be the world's servant, and as it serves,
Choosing whatever task's most difficult
Among tasks not impossible, it takes
Upon the body and upon the soul
The coarseness of the drudge. . . .

Reformer, merchant, statesman, learned man,
Dutiful husband, honest wife by turn,
Cradle upon cradle, and all in flight and all
Deformed because there is no deformity
But saves us from a dream.¹

¹ *Collected Poems*, p. 186.

Until, through the types of the Hunchback, the Saint, and the Fool, we return to the first phase, the dark of the moon, the stage of complete objectivity, where the dough is kneaded up again, to be formed again through the aeons after the old patterns.

Much of this re-states, with a supernatural panache, what Yeats has implied before. The natural man, and he who struggles with his own soul may be beautiful: the reformer, merchant, statesman, dutiful husband, are ugly and deformed. Have we not already heard, in the essay on Spenser, that beauty passed out of our culture with the coming of Puritan commercialism, and Puritan worry about other people's sins? Have we not heard that out of the quarrel with the world we make rhetoric; and was not rhetoric the tedious enemy of Yeats's early years? The difference is that what were formerly mere literary and social predilections have now assumed metaphysical status. The twenty-eight phases are the twenty-eight possible incarnations, to complete which is to complete a whole cycle of being. (Of course Yeats has always believed in reincarnation.) Man begins at phase one, the dark of the moon, complete objectivity: he seeks the opposite, finds it at the full moon, where body becomes only the complete expression of soul: then through the later phases he sinks back again to the undifferentiated mass. An analogous cycle is also traversed in an individual life, in a single judgment or act of thought: it is the rhythm of every completed movement of thought or life. Yeats called it the Great Wheel, and in the original form of *A Vision* described it as being traced on the desert sands by the feet of mysterious dancers. This symbol of the dance, seen as a kind of cyclical determinism, a predestined round which all men must tread, has left many traces on his poetry.

All men are dancers and their tread
Goes to the barbarous clangour of a gong.

So he writes in 'Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen': in 'The Double Vision of Michael Robartes' the image is different; it is of man being pounded, kneaded and formed by constrained mechanical creatures outside the temporal process. But in this difficult poem the dance symbolism occurs also — in the figure of the dancer, the girl who has brought her body to perfection by dancing, and has danced herself to death. She appears between two heraldic supporters, a Sphinx representing impassive intellect, a Buddha in the attitude of benediction, representing universal love. The girl, by following the rhythm of the cosmic dance has perfected her body so that it is only the expression of soul, has reached the phase of the full moon, of perfect beauty: and she is dead, for this state of existence is not a human state. The poet is obsessed by her supernatural image: yet he is divided and driven to madness,

Being caught between the pull
Of the dark moon and the full,

— the life of nature and the life of visionary contemplation.

The same figure appears in the next poem, 'Michael Robartes and the Dancer', this time in a more human guise. The poem reads on the surface as dialogue between a man and a woman in which he tells her that the only job of a beautiful woman is to be beautiful, and that she must despise opinion and book-knowledge. It does, of course, say this, and so far connects with several other passages (in 'A Prayer for my Daughter', 'On a Political Prisoner', and elsewhere) on the same theme, with Yeats's own love experiences, and his hatred of rationalizing and argumentativeness in women. But this is not all that the poem is about; Yeats describes it as an endeavour to explain his philosophy of life and death. It is not a piece of advice to young women, it is a statement about the human situation. The dancer is again the human entity — I must not say soul, for the point is that soul and body are not separable — whose function is to complete itself in beauty: and for Yeats physical beauty is the invariable accompaniment of spiritual completeness. All that is learnt in colleges, abstract thought, information, sociology and argument, is a dragon that must be killed ('wring the neck of rhetoric'): when every thought is banished, except that which the perfected body can think too, then 'the blest soul' is 'not composite', body and soul are one, the moon is full. But, to complete the thought by reference to *A Vision*, this blessed state is not permanent, man must return to the wheel; the succeeding incarnations, of reformers, learned men, 'sophists, economists and calculators', are all phases of growing deformity and ugliness, till all at last sinks in the undifferentiated life of nature, to start the round once more. The dance symbolism appears again, at its greatest pitch of intensity, in Byzantium, in the dance at midnight on the Emperor's pavement.

Where blood-begotten spirits come
And all complexities of fury leave
Dying into a dance
An agony of trance
An agony of flame that cannot singe a sleeve.¹

To return to a more breatheable air. This train of speculation led Yeats to an interest in psychology and character that was new to him. We see it reflected in his poems about his friends and about historical persons. Yeats never tries, even in drama, to 'create character', in the conventional sense, and is said in life to have been a bad judge of men. But he has what serves him better, flashes of insight into certain mental states and movements of the spirit, an insight that

¹ *Collected Poems*, p. 281.

can be often acid and ironical, as we see in the malicious passages of *Dramatis Personae*. Among a varied assortment of strange riches, this element is not absent in *A Vision*. Take the description of the character of Phase Twenty-Four, whose historical exemplars are, somewhat oddly, Queen Victoria, Galsworthy and Lady Gregory.

There is great humility — 'she died every day she lived' — and pride as great, pride in the code's acceptance, an impersonal pride, as though one were to sign 'servant of servants'. There is no philosophic capacity, no intellectual curiosity, but there is no dislike for either philosophy or science; they are a part of the world and that world is accepted. There may be great intolerance for all who break or resist the code, and great tolerance for all the evil of the world that is clearly beyond it whether above it or below. The code must rule, and because that code cannot be an intellectual choice, it is always a tradition bound up with family, or office, or trade, always a part of history.¹

Suddenly the oddly chosen examples fit into place; one recognizes their kinship, and the state of the human soul, somewhere between innocence and experience, to which they belong. It is like reading the description of one of the psychological types in Jung, and finding in it a picture of a real acquaintance. More surprisingly, *A Vision* contains snatches of Yeats's peculiar humour. Humour came to him late — his early work has a hieratic solemnity — and when it came it was in the form of a sudden delighted recognition of incongruity in the midst of grave mysteries. My favourite is the victim of curiosity in the Eighteenth Phase (the one that includes Goethe and Matthew Arnold) who reflects 'I was never in love with a serpent-charmer before'.

But the twenty-eight phases are not mere fortuitous types of character, they are twenty-eight incarnations through which the soul of man must pass, and some of us are in one stage, some in another. As the same rhythm runs through all created things, human history passes through a similar cycle. Just as the psychological aspect of *A Vision* led Yeats to read biography in order to find examples of the phases, so its historical aspect led him to supplement the history he had read at school, hitherto left almost unamended, by reading a certain amount of ordinary historical writing, but especially writers with a theory of the historical process, like Spengler and Toynbee; later Vico, whom he studied through Croce. These theories of a cyclical movement in history coalesced in his mind with the Magnus Annus of the Platonists, the Great Year in which a revolution of the whole stellar system is completed. Doubtless too in his theosophical days he had heard of the talpas, the aeons of the Hindus, at the end

¹ *A Vision*, 1937, p. 170.

of which the whole creation is dissolved into a formless unity, to be re-fashioned, when the whim takes him, by the imagination of the Uncreated. Yeats shares with the Hindu conception the unteleological feeling: there is no goal for humanity (for the individual human soul there may be), history moves in a circle and civilizations only emerge from the womb to sink into it again. An outline sketch of the process is given in 'Dove or Swan', the fifth book of *A Vision*: Yeats's particular interest is in our own historical epoch, and the position in it of certain crucial events.

I saw a staring virgin stand
Where holy Dionysus died,
And tear the heart out of his side,
And lay the heart upon her hand
And bear that beating heart away;
And then did all the Muses sing
Of Magnus Annus at the spring,
As though God's death were but a play.¹

And indeed it is but a play, one which must be acted many times. The verse comes from *The Resurrection*, in which Christ, risen from the dead, appears to his disciples in a room, at the same time as the frenzied worshippers of Dionysus, outside the house, are praying for the resurrection of their god. The same form recurs, but in a different material; they have their resurrection, but it is not Dionysus, it is another God who is re-born. The length of the Great Year has been variously calculated and there are smaller cycles within it: the whole Christian era is one such cycle, and it is now coming to an end. We are now passing through its last phases, the civilization of policemen, schoolmasters, manufacturers, philanthropists, and fast approaching the phase of undifferentiated chaos.² As before, the new era will be heralded by an incarnation, foreseen in 'The Second Coming'.

Somewhere in sands of the desert
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
The darkness drops again, but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?³

If we still thought in that way, this terrific poem might gain for

¹ *Wheels and Butterflies*, p. 112.

² *A Vision*, p. 205.

³ *Collected Poems*, p. 211.

Yeats the reputation as a prophet that the fourth Eclogue did for Virgil. Let us throw our sop to literalism — Virgil was writing about a son of Asinius Pollio, or whatever it was, and Yeats about the Black-and-Tans. But Yeats himself believed that Virgil was 'a wizard and a knowledgeable man', and that his symbol, equally with Virgil's, was 'a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi', the Great Memory that is also the source of prophecy, since history repeats the same predestined cycles. To Yeats the incarnation of Christ was a violent and turbulent thing: it is 'the uncontrollable mystery on the bestial floor', a desired and dreaded consummation which the Magi, unsatisfied by Calvary, are looking for again. It ushered in 'a fabulous formless darkness' which dissolves all the constructions of previous civilizations.

Odour of blood when Christ was slain
Made all Platonic tolerance vain
And vain all Doric discipline.

So the new incarnation that we await will be violent and turbulent, and will make vain all the disciplines which we have tried to think most lasting.

We too had many pretty toys when young;
A law indifferent to blame or praise,
To bribe or threat; habits that made old wrong
Melt down, as it were wax in the sun's rays;
Public opinion ripening for so long
We thought it would outlive all future days.
O what fine thought we had because we thought
That the worst rogues and rascals had died out.

Now days are dragon-ridden, the nightmare
Rides upon sleep: a drunken soldiery
Can leave the mother, murdered at her door,
To crawl in her own blood, and go scot-free;
The night can sweat with terror as before
We pieced out thoughts into philosophy,
And planned to bring the world under a rule,
Who are but weasels fighting in a hole.¹

And so approaches the last phase, that marks the end of every historical era; 'man awaits death and judgment with nothing to occupy the worldly faculties, and helpless before the world's disorder, drags out of the sub-conscious the conviction that the world is about to end'.²

Not only is the transition from one era to another naturally a

¹ *Collected Poems*, p. 233.

² *A Vision*, p. 285.

period of turmoil; but the era which is approaching is in itself a turbulent one, a denial of Christian ideals.

At the birth of Christ religious life becomes primary, secular life antithetical — man gives to Caesar the things that are Caesar's. A primary dispensation looking beyond itself towards a transcendent power is dogmatic, levelling, unifying, feminine, humane, peace its means and end; an antithetical dispensation obeys imminent¹ power, is expressive, hierarchical, multiple, masculine, harsh, surgical. The approaching antithetical influx, and that particular antithetical dispensation for which the intellectual preparation has begun will reach its complete systematization at that moment when, as I have already shown, the Great Year comes to its intellectual climax. Something of what I have said it must be, the myth declares, for it must reverse our era and resume past eras in itself; what else it must be, no man can say, for always at the critical moment the Thirteenth Cone, the sphere, the unique intervenes.²

The thirteenth cone, in Yeats's symbolism, is the domain of the incalculable, it is what, despite the common rhythm, prevents history from merely repeating itself. One cannot avoid the impression that Yeats looked forward to the coming 'masculine, harsh, surgical' dispensation with a certain sombre relish. The intellectual preparation he speaks of he found in the works of Gentile, and he notes that it underlies the political philosophy of Italy: his friendship with Ezra Pound may have helped him to admire this. The culture heroes of his later years tend more and more to violence and inhumanity, and he was for a moment taken in by a sort of shabby Irish fascism. He was lucky to die in 1939, before the thirteenth cone had shown what was at the bottom of its bag of tricks, if this is the bottom. What is remarkable is not that he found relief for a time in the smash-up sentiment: most people do at times. The remarkable thing is that he saw through all the contemporary claptrap, saw that however the struggle between civilization and bestiality might be rigged, the result must be the triumph of bestiality.

The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Yeats had little experience of pity, perhaps fortunately for his verse, for in most hands it is a deliquescent emotion. In 'Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen', the poem in which the decay of the liberal and humanitarian tradition is most searchingly analysed, he has no social consolation to offer; but the crux of the poem is that the solitary soul is not hopelessly involved in the chaos.

¹ *Sic*. But he must mean 'immanent'.

² *A Vision*, p. 263.

He who can read the signs, nor sink unmanned
 Into the half-deceit of some intoxicant
 From shallow wits; who knows no work can stand,
 Whether health, wealth or peace of mind were spent
 On master-work of intellect or hand,
 No honour leave its mighty monument,
 Has but one comfort left: all triumph would
 But break upon his ghostly solitude.¹

The interpretation of this 'ghostly solitude' is the most difficult question offered by Yeats's later poetry. Phrases about the death-wish come easily into the mind: some of the imagery fits easily into the categories of Christian mysticism. But explanations along either of these lines are either inadequate or wrong: most of all in this part of Yeats's work it is important to remember that the poetry means what it says, that the idea cannot be separated from the symbol, though one may temporarily try to abstract it in an effort at exposition. Yeats's father said to him that his imaginations were always mundane, even if they were set in the other world; and it is true; his conception of the supra-terrestrial destiny of the soul is curiously concrete; it can be mapped and described; it can be embodied in apparitions and images; and this makes it very unlike the incommunicable experiences of orthodox mysticism.

The image which he uses most often to represent the solitary soul is the swan, one of the wild swans at Coole,

like the soul it sails into the sight
 And in the morning's gone, no man knows why.²

The disappearance of the swan into the darkening sky appears sometimes as a mere image of annihilation.

The swan has leaped into the desolate heaven:
 That image can bring wildness, bring a rage
 To end all things — .³

But what distinguishes Yeats from other poets who might, in this phase, seem to resemble him, is the endless energy and curiosity with which he explores this darkness, the darkness which has been so often seen as a cessation of energy and curiosity. There is no trace in Yeats of the Shelleyan tired child, longing for a dreamless sleep; and however nearly he may seem to approach it, he does not assert the mystical paradox that the darkness is light and the nothing everything. To the end of his life he is 'caught between the pull of the dark moon and the full', the phenomenal world and whatever is beyond it. Neglecting the almost untraceable complications let

¹ *Collected Poems*, p. 234.

² *Collected Poems*, p. 275.

³ *ibid.*, p. 235.

us try to discern some of the main images on the web of belief that he stretched between these two poles.

In the first place Yeats had an assured belief in personal immortality, he believed that he had evidence of it that would satisfy any court of law. ('With a jury of metaphysicians?' Mr Hone, his biographer, has pertinently asked.) He also feels passionately that the fact of personal immortality is of absolute and central importance. Valery's *Cimetière Marin* is expunged from his list of sacred books, because it rejoices that human life must pass. And F. H. Bradley is written off as 'an arrogant, sapless man', because he neither believed nor wished to believe in the immortality of soul and body.¹ Yeats also believed that he was in possession, partly as a result of his researches into magical tradition, partly as a result of actual supernatural communications, of detailed knowledge about the future destiny of the human soul. He expounds it darkly in *Per Amica*, more categorically in Book III of *A Vision* called 'The Soul in Judgment'. His late plays, *The Words upon the Window-Pane* and *Purgatory*, are both comments on the same theme. But it must be realized that the terms judgment and purgatory are used with only a very vague resemblance to their conventional meanings; mostly Yeats uses a terminology of his own, which I do not discuss here, though correspondences between it and the more ordinary dialects of philosophy and religion could be worked out. We might say that Yeats conceived both this life and the life to come as a continuous purgatory: but we should have to add immediately that it is a purgatory conceived in quite amoral terms, and having little analogy with the sacrament of penance. And it is a Purgatory almost without the expectation of Paradise. After re-living its earthly experiences the soul prepares for another incarnation, and the theme of escape from the wheel of becoming, central in Hinduism and Buddhism, plays a relatively small part in Yeats's imagination. Individual responsibility, central to Buddhism and Christianity, is also greatly reduced. Yeats held always what he had announced in 1901 as two of the fundamental doctrines of magic — that the borders of our minds are ever shifting, that many minds can flow into one another; and that our memories are a part of one great memory, Anima Mundi, the memory of nature herself.² His belief asserts, too, far more fully and concretely than the Catholic angelology or prayer for the dead, a continual interaction between incarnate and discarnate spirits, so that the images which come in dreams or in artistic creation are actually produced by the action of the dead, or by irruptions, like Jung's archetypes, from the Anima Mundi.

The period between death and re-birth is elaborately systematized in Book III of *A Vision*. The main features are a re-living by the

¹ *A Vision*, p. 219.

² *Essays*, 1924, p. 33.

spirit, over and over again, of the events that have most moved it in life: this is at first compulsive; it is called the Dreaming Back, and can only be performed by the help of incarnate minds; it explains the apparitions haunting the places where they lived that fill the literature of all countries. This is followed by the Return, another repetition of the same events, but this time purposive: the experience is repeated in order that it may be understood, that all may be converted into knowledge. In another process the spirit follows out the consequences of its desires, fulfilling even its phantasies. (This sounds a dangerously attractive phase of the spiritual life.) When the spirit has thus exhausted all passionate events, it has liberated itself and the past life is dismissed. It is now no longer one of 'the dead', but is a free spirit, and in further stages of purgation, less clearly conceived, it is purged of good and evil, and its intentions are purified of 'complexity' and brought back, as it were, to certain spiritual norms. (Yeats connects this with his early conviction that the power of the lyric poet depends on his accepting one of a few traditional attitudes, lover, sage, hero, scorner of life.) The last stage is the Foreknowledge, a vision of the next incarnation, which the spirit must accept before it is re-born.

All this is of course only Yeats's personal systematization of the world-wide and age-old tradition of the cycle of birth and re-birth. What is peculiar to Yeats is that the discarnate existence is filled with a repetition of what has already happened in the flesh, a continuation of its passions, and even its relations with other beings. So that the whole myth takes the form of an indefinite extension of the phenomenal world, as though it were that which Yeats wishes to make eternal. The Indian longing to escape from the wheel is hardly more than suggested, and rather surprisingly, such symptoms of it as there are do not appear most clearly at the end of Yeats's life. It is at the close of *Per Amica*, in 1917, that he speaks of 'the condition of fire', the state which seems to correspond most nearly with normal religious experience.

At certain moments, always unforeseen, I become happy, . . . I look at the strangers near as if I had known them all my life, and it seems strange that I cannot speak to them: everything fills me with affection, I have no longer any fears or any needs; I do not even remember that this happy mood must come to an end. It seems as if the vehicle had suddenly grown pure and far extended and so luminous that the images from Anima Mundi, embodied there and drunk with that sweetness, would, like a country drunkard who had thrown a wisp into his own thatch, burn up time.¹

¹ *Essays*, 1924, p. 533.

The same state is described in 'Vacillation'.

My fiftieth year had come and gone,
I sat, a solitary man,
In a crowded London shop,
An open book and empty cup
On the marble table-top.
While on the shop and street I gazed
My body of a sudden blazed;
And twenty minutes more or less
It seemed, so great my happiness,
That I was blessed and could bless.¹

The language of *Per Amica* is obscure, but this experience seems to be connected with the full acceptance of the mask. The soul having completed itself by assuming the mask, its own complement, is liberated, and momentarily at least is out of the wheel. At this time Yeats is disposed to interpret the liberation in something very like Christian terms.

It may be an hour before the mood passes, but latterly I seem to understand that I enter upon it the moment I cease to hate. I think the common condition of our life is hatred — I know that this is so with me — irritation with public or private events or persons . . . And plainly, when I have closed a book, too stirred to go on reading, and in those brief intense visions of sleep, I have something about me that, though it makes me love, is more like innocence.²

And he wonders whether in a little time he will not give up his 'barbarous words', and grow old 'to some kind of simple piety like that of an old woman'.

But this did not happen. The Byzantium symbol, which he later uses for the Ultima Thule of the life of the spirit, is far from simple and has little in common with what most people call piety. Nor is there anything to suggest that the state it represents is any more permanent than other phases of the soul's journey. It cannot therefore be equated with nirvana or the beatific vision. To use the language of orthodoxy, Yeats's experience is that of the ecstatic, not that of the true mystic. Byzantium, the theme of what are perhaps Yeats's two greatest and most complex poems, is a coalescence of ideas derived from actual Byzantine art, and from the reading of history undertaken to illustrate *A Vision*. Byzantine architecture suggests to him that of the 'Sacred City in the Apocalypse of St John', and he writes, whether prompted by vision or history is not apparent: 'I think if I could be given a month of Antiquity and leave

¹ *Collected Poems*, p. 283.

² *Essays*, 1924, p. 535.

to spend it where I chose, I would spend it in Byzantium a little before Justinian opened St Sophia and closed the Academy of Plato. I think I could find in some little wine-shop some philosophical worker in mosaic who could answer all my questions, . . . I think that in early Byzantium, maybe never before or since in recorded history, religious, aesthetic and practical life were one'.¹ Therefore Byzantium becomes the symbol of that state in which man, by a full acceptance of the mask, attains a unity that is the antithesis of the natural life.

Before me floats an image, man or shade,
Shade more than man, more image than a shade;
For Hades' bobbin bound in mummy-cloth
May unwind the winding path;
A mouth that has no moisture and no breath
Breathless mouths may summon;
I hail the superhuman;
I call it death-in-life and life-in-death.²

The key-word of this second Byzantium poem is 'complexity'. The moonlit dome of the holy city disdains

all that man is,
All mere complexities,
The fury and the mire of human veins.

The miraculous bird seated on its golden bough scorns 'all complexities of mire or blood'; and at the heart of the city is the Emperor's pavement, where blood-begotten spirits come to join in the dance which will rid them of 'all complexities of fury'.

The state of soul which Byzantium represents exercises the most powerful attraction and at the same time the most violent resistance. 'The Tower', 'Blood and the Moon', the earlier 'Sailing to Byzantium', and other poems record this conflict. This universal conflict between nature and what is beyond nature coalesces in Yeats's mind with the physiological processes of old age; to produce poetry in which Byzantium is accepted, but unwillingly, as a *pis-aller*.

What shall I do with this absurdity —
O heart, O troubled heart — this caricature,
Decrepit age that has been tied to me
As to a dog's tail? . . .

It seems that I must bid the Muse go pack,
Choose Plato and Plotinus for a friend
Until imagination, ear and eye,

¹ *A Vision*, p. 279.

² *Collected Poems*, p. 280.

Can be content with argument and deal
 In abstract things; or be derided by
 A sort of battered kettle at the heel.¹

Or we find bitter angry verse, explosions of sensuality; he said all his last verse was prompted by rage or lust. The only poem which accepts the prospect of death with equanimity is not Yeats's own; it is the splendid and sombre adaptation from *Oedipus at Colonus* which concludes 'A Man Young and Old'.

Even from that delight memory treasures so,
 Death, despair, division of families, all entanglements of mankind grow,
 As that old wandering beggar and these God-hated children know.

In the long echoing street the laughing dancers throng,
 The bride is carried to the bridegroom's chamber through torchlight and tumultuous song;

I celebrate the silent kiss that ends short life or long.²

The way of regarding love as something with historical consequences is as un-Yeatsian as the 'gay goodnight' of the last stanza is un-Greek. The opposites between which his later life were torn are best expressed by Byzantium on the one hand, and on the other, the speech of self, in the 'Dialogue between Self and Soul'.

I am content to live it all again
 And yet again, if it be life to pitch
 Into the frog-spawn of a blind man's ditch,
 A blind man battering blind men;
 Or into that most fecund ditch of all,
 The folly that man does
 Or must suffer, if he woos
 A proud woman not kindred of his soul.³

It is no use therefore to try to fit Yeats out with any last words of serene assurance. If his late poems have been justly compared to Beethoven's late quartets, it is for their complexity and the intensity of their spiritual experience, and not for any ultimate calm. For all the unearthly harmonies of Yeats's last phase, we cannot liken it to the one that Dowden invented for Shakespeare; and for Yeats there is no death-bed wisdom. How should there be, his faith being as it was? How should there be, at the end of a process so little complete, so little self-contained as a single human incarnation?

¹ *Collected Poems*, p. 218.

² *ibid.*, p. 255.

³ *ibid.*, p. 267.

IV. *His Beliefs*

So far I have only tried to explain some of Yeats's poetry in terms of his beliefs: but what are we to say about the much more difficult question of the beliefs themselves? One can observe a tendency, since Yeats's death, both in writing and conversation, to suppose that he somehow contrived to make great poetry out of ideas that were arbitrary, fantastic or merely absurd. I do not think that this is true, or even possible: the beliefs underlying any great poetry must represent a permanently or recurrently important phase of the human spirit, and cannot be merely individual or fashionable fantasy. It is also sometimes held that the beliefs of a poet are only incitements to temporarily appropriate emotional attitudes, and that any further question about their validity is irrelevant. This does appear to fit some kinds of poetical statement; 'beauty is truth, truth beauty', for instance: but to apply it, say, to Dante's versification of scholastic philosophy:

E quinci appar ch'ogni minor natura
e corto recettacolo a quel bene
che non ha fine, e se con se misura;¹

is at best a patent travesty of the author's purpose. Keats's beliefs, if he had any, do seem to be merely auxiliaries to the texture and shape of the poems in which they occur. To talk of Dante's beliefs in this way is plainly absurd. Of course poetry can be read anyhow; but the poet's intentions should give some indication of the best method of approach. Dante writes poetry to express a faith, he does not excogitate a faith to provide a background for a poem, as, say, Keats does in *Hyperion*: and our appreciation of Dante cannot be wholly divorced from our attitude to medieval Christian philosophy. It is necessary therefore to find some means of defining one's attitude to a poet's ideas: and it is unlikely that many readers of poetry will be sufficiently metaphysicians to do so on strictly philosophical grounds. Perhaps the only generally available way is to try to see the poet's ideas in relation to others, to see where they coincide and where they clash with other ways of thought, and where they are simply irrelevant to them. This at least does something to connect poetry with other kinds of experience; and it gives a chance of setting technical criticism in a wider framework.

Yeats is essentially a poet to be treated in this way. He constantly asserts in his later days that he wrote poems 'as texts for exposition'² 'to explain my philosophy of life and death', to express 'convictions about this world and the next'.³ Oisín and Cúchulain may legitimately be treated with 'that willing suspension of disbelief that

¹ *Paradiso*, xix, 49.

² *Collected Poems*, p. 446 note.

³ *Hone, Life of Yeats*, p. 472.

constitutes poetic faith', but the creative myths by which Yeats expresses his deepest convictions demand a different attitude. Let us avoid slick prejudgments about what is or is not evidence; and let us rid ourselves of the vulgar superstition that the pronouncements *de rerum natura* of a bishop, a physicist or a psychiatrist have necessarily more authority than those of a poet. If you believe that a 'philosophy of life and death' can be a matter of organized knowledge, in which every additional piece of evidence is a permanent gain, like physical science, then most of the time Yeats is talking simple nonsense. If you believe that the only things which it is possible to talk sense about are these which are empirically verifiable, then he is talking nonsense in the Pickwickian sense of the logical positivists; but so, of course, is almost everybody else. If you believe that any attempt at such a philosophy must be a mythological approximation to a reality that is in any case inexpressible, Yeats's myth has as good a chance of being right as any other. This is the view I propose to take, and since on this view there is no final way of judging the truth or otherwise of a myth, one can only make a fragmentary attempt at showing its relation to other systems.

In practice we use as a criterion in these matters something like the *consensus gentium*, logically irrelevant though that may be: and the congruity of a particular world-view with our own private feeling about the nature of things. By these standards there is much in Yeats's system which is merely arbitrary. This however is hardly more than accidental: Yeats's four principles, twenty-eight phases and so forth are no more arbitrary than similar Catholic formulations — the three theological virtues and the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost: or Jung's two attitudes and four faculties. There seems no earthly reason why there should not be a fifth principle, a third attitude, an eighth deadly sin, or whatever it is. Nor is there any reason; but the authority of a great organization or the prestige of science give some of these formulations a sort of classical status. This sort of psychological and metaphysical classification delighted Scholastics and Vedantists: to most people today it is unmeaning and repugnant. To a large extent Yeats is wilfully trailing his coat by using an unpopular mode of expression. Yet, as we have suggested already, he is only embodying in his own particular symbolism an ancient and widespread idea.

The belief in reincarnation has attracted two types of mind — one pessimist and quietist like Gautama, the other energetically in love with the whole of man's psycho-physical experience, like Blake. The one sees in human life 'sabbha dukkha, sabbha anatta, sabbha anikka', everywhere sorrow, everywhere impermanence, everywhere unreality; and it sees the wheel of becoming as a weary round from which it is the aim of the human soul to escape. The other,

though it may sometimes pay temporary tribute to this Oriental attitude, is so deeply attached to the phenomenal world that it cannot bear to think of it except as eternally recurrent: if it believes in spirits, it gives them aerial bodies; if it has a remote and formal hope of being saved from the cycle of re-birth, it wants to postpone its salvation as long as possible. It is to this type that Yeats belongs. The irrevocable choice, the final judgment of Christian eschatology would have been infinitely repugnant to him, if he had ever seriously entertained it, which in fact he does not seem to have done. The belief in progress is equally repugnant, for it implies that the future will be different from the past, and Yeats is in love with experience, with the world as it has been. So he pictures man moving in a cycle of incarnations, which bring him back, after phases of various complexity, to his starting point, the un-self-conscious life of nature. History moves in a similar round, and when one cycle is completed it starts on the round again. The same rhythm is preserved, though the second cycle does not merely repeat the first, and its exact nature is always incalculable. Thus there is always the possibility of new experience, though it cannot differ fundamentally from the old.

Formally this may look like Hindu belief, but the emotional colouring is very different, and Yeats's belief actually springs from a very different central core of conviction. Hindu thought springs from a conviction that phenomenal experience is absolutely without value; Yeats's from a conviction that phenomenal experience is all we have, and that all value must be found within it. Christian and Indian religious belief have this in common with the belief in progress — that they all look for salvation in a state outside our present experience. Yeats does not believe that salvation is a goal to which we can attain by moral discipline or material development: it is something that we make, out of material already at our disposal.

I mock Plotinus' thought
And cry in Plato's teeth,
Death and life were not
Till man made up the whole,
Made lock, stock and barrel
Out of his bitter soul,
Aye, sun and moon and star, all.
And further add to that
That, being dead, we rise,
Dream and so create
Translunar Paradise.¹

His conception of the next life, as we have said, makes a good deal of it very like a recapitulation of this one. And in spite of his hatred

¹ *Collected Poems*, p. 223.

for empirical science he was willing enough to use its methods on any subject that he cared about; for his belief in human survival is mainly based on empirical evidence, the evidence from psychical research. His concentration on 'ancient wisdom' is not mere romantic antiquarianism: amid a good deal of fantasy in detail there remains the perfectly rational conviction that men in earlier ages had accumulated much knowledge and evidence of these matters which the modern world has tacitly agreed to neglect; and that the surviving beliefs and experiences of primitive people, and those who were outside the modern scientific tradition, were therefore of primary importance. Yeats's attitude to his evidence was an excessively uncritical one; but on the question of considering such evidence at all we can hardly do better than to remember the caveat of Dr C. D. Broad against confusing the Author of Nature with the editor of *Nature*, and of assuming that the one would not permit in his creation what the other would not accept as a contribution.

But of course the examination of psychic phenomena is only mildly unfashionable in our age; what is extremely unfashionable is to base a whole world-view upon it, as Yeats did. Yet Yeats is surely right to believe that if there is a possibility of survival it is of primary emotional importance to mankind; and that indifference to it is either affectation or stark insensibility. The almost universal belief in survival is no evidence of its truth, but it is evidence of its immense importance to the human mind.

I dwell on these unsympathetic and unpoetical themes because I believe that the general acceptance of Yeats's poetic greatness has been combined with a quite unjustifiable indifference to most of what he actually said. We may admit that his hostility to the prevailing modes of thought in his day may have had its root in prejudice and the conventions of a coterie; and the danger of this is of being left in a frowsty little backwater. Yeats's distinction is in his determination not to be so left, but to find another tradition more adequate to his experience. His opposition to the whole post-seventeenth-century climate of opinion nevertheless remains a formidable obstacle to the proper appreciation of his work; and the desire to find a connection between the thought of a poet whom we admire and other kinds of thought that we accept is a perfectly legitimate one. Let us therefore end on a more consolatory note. If we are to find any analogy in the contemporary world to Yeats's way of thinking it is in the analytical psychologists. They too have been driven to dreams and fantasies to explain man's total experience, and have found analogies between them and ancient and primitive beliefs. Of course the Freudian school has explored these irrational territories only in the interests of a scientific positivism; the connection we are looking for is between Yeats and Jung. Many of the

parallels are sufficiently obvious. Yeats's *Anima Mundi*, from which the images of the poet are derived, is Jung's collective unconscious, from which come the archetypes of myth and legend. Yeats's mask is the unconscious, in Jung's sense, not in Freud's — not the waste-paper basket for discarded experiences and desires, but the vehicle of the buried faculties, those which are unused in the conscious life. The creative power which comes from the acceptance of the mask corresponds with the psychic re-birth which, in Jung's psychology, follows on the emergence of the submerged faculties. No doubt many similar elucidations could be worked out, by one who had the patience, the knowledge and the power of correlation; which probably means Jung himself. So great a mythologist as Yeats needs another mythologist to interpret him, and Jung's mythopoeic faculty is very much of the same kind. Like Yeats he is unsatisfied by the established religious formulas, yet is profoundly concerned with religion; like Yeats he uses sub-rational or supra-rational intuitions to complete the thin and abstract picture of the world given by logic and the senses. We find in both the same fertility, and the same obscurity about the exact status of the myth. When Jung explains ecstatic and mystical experience in terms of the unconscious we feel the same uncertainty as we do when Yeats talks about 'the condition of fire'. Into what country are we being led? Are Byzantium and the collective unconscious, psychological or metaphysical entities? All remains obscure, but involved with the obscurity is a sense of richness and adequacy, the antithesis of the cheap desire to explain away what cannot be immediately understood; and it is perhaps not an accident that the closest analogy to Yeats's thought is to be found in the work of the psychologist who has done most justice to the depth and variety of human experience.

CROCE AND FASCISM

D. MACK SMITH

ONE of the more interesting chapters in Mussolini's success story will deal with the decline of liberalism and the Italian liberal party. In April 1923, six months after the *coup d'état*, the liberal congress of Milan voted confidence in fascist rule. In January 1924 the liberal party made an electoral alliance with fascists 'against the anti-national socialists and the demagogic popular Christian party'. Then in October 1924, after the Matteotti murder had shaken their faith, they confirmed the alliance, if reluctantly. Not till January 1925 was opposition finally proclaimed, just before the party was dissolved and the means of legal opposition suppressed. It should be remembered that fascism in these years was still confused and hesitant, and the prestige of a liberal like Croce was so enormous that his anathema might have been as effective as it had once been against both Marxists and *D'Annunzianesimo*. It is interesting to see what he has to say on the matter.

Croce has repudiated the title of precursor given him by some fascists. He even wrote once: 'we who opposed fascism as much as was possible cannot be held to have been either criminal or even foolish, for we gave clear warning of the national disaster it would lead to.' Both these statements are questionable. He has himself recalled how the liberals once welcomed fascism 'hoping that it would bring fresh life and force into politics, new forces of renovation and (why not?) of conservatism'. Fascism was for him

a simple revival of failing patriotism, a bold entry into politics by the younger generation who had fought the war, an accidental breach of the dykes which would be at once repaired, and a generous if disorderly impetus of renewal to Italy, from whom we never thought it could be possible to snatch away the liberty won by our fathers of the *risorgimento* (*La Critica*, March, 1944)

The only blame, he thought, was for this too comfortable certainty that inherited liberty could be enjoyed without ceaseless effort. But actually much in the theory and practice of liberals was disastrous, their love of a quiet life and willingness to leave politics to professionals, their belief in the self-evidence of their creed and the inevitability of its ultimate triumph. They refused compromise with their enemies the 'democrats'. They had no skill to adapt liberalism to a new age as Croce knew it must be adapted. As a historian and in

theory he would justify past change as a necessary means of saving continuity, but in practice and in the present change was unwelcome, just as Giolitti had thought that the post-war crisis could be solved by the old back-stairs bribery of deputies which had sufficed before. Besides lacking political tact, Croce, by his doctrine of politics as pure force, had prepared people to justify the lies and violence through which fascism won power. His relative judgments allowed no intrinsic superiority to constitutional monarchy any more than to private property or religious toleration, and he held that the cause of liberty might occasionally be served by a more or less prolonged dictatorship.

Evidently he had not learnt from history that 'temporary dictatorship' was an illusion, or that a good end might be conditioned by the means employed. He disregarded the logical fallacy of his theory that victorious reaction could only consolidate its victory by somehow 'negating itself' and returning to the liberal method. This was the fruit of his dialectical view of history. On the one hand it made people think that what happened must be necessary and true, that Italy would somehow produce the system that suited her, and that if authoritarianism replaced liberalism it must have some inherent virtue. On the other it persuaded him to welcome Mussolini as a stimulus to a temporarily decadent liberalism, like Napoleon and Metternich 'urging on liberalism with stings and blows, inducing it to produce something new as the plough does the earth'. Croce fitted history to his theory by discovering that liberalism had hitherto been decaying only through want of adversaries — as though there had ever been a moment when Marx, Bismarck, Comte, Nietzsche, D'Annunzio were not in mortal combat with his creed. Moreover, since liberty itself, by definition, could never die, what really had perished at the hands of Mussolini was license, another form of reaction, not liberal but tyrannical. Liberty would go on corroding his despotism from within, stimulated by his challenge, to reappear one day wiser and stronger. The most oppressive tyranny never existed without consent, and consent was always, even in the most liberal state, forced, 'because neither would exist without the other'. In stressing such academic truisms Croce was more eager to explain the catastrophe than to fight against it, and this analytic, retrospective temperament, valuable though it was, led the liberals to their easy abdication from power, the real *trahison des clercs*.

Apathy in politics is one of the most typical features of liberalism. Croce confessed that by comparison with 1917 the situation in 1924 did not seem dangerous, and he thought he could go back in peace to his studies. The historian knew how similar crises of growth marked the development of all nations, and it was 'nonsense' for the fascists to call it a war of religion.

This was a period in which many of my generation thought or hoped that the political crisis was less severe than it turned out to be, and judged it with minds accustomed to the placid course of parliamentary broils.

However grave may be the political events of the day I do not want to add to my other writing by bothering about them . . . It cannot matter much what I think of politics who have Aristotle but not Achilles in my breast. If you must know, I am politically a liberal; not on philosophic grounds, for these have nothing to say in the matter, but in the same way as I am a Neapolitan. How could I not be a liberal born when and where I was? . . . I have always called those philosophers ridiculous and odious who speak as philosophers in political matters. (*Pagine Sparse*, vol. II, 1943, p. 371.)

Croce had always preached that philosophy was an absolute, and its incorporation into a party would confound it with baser things. Liberal philosophy could thus not tell us to join the liberal party, because even the fascists had some truth and necessity, and the clash of opposite forces was good and would have to be created if it did not naturally exist. So at this critical moment Croce refused to justify political liberalism on 'theoretical or philosophic' grounds, even though the history of Gentile and others showed the ingenuousness of his belief that people of his generation and training would be naturally liberal. This was the *gran rifiuto* of Italian liberals, who failed to inherit Cavour's fighting spirit, failed to accept the challenge of fascism until it was too late — or perhaps only failed to produce a statesman of Cavour's calibre instead of the Giolitti whom Croce so much admired. 'The triumph of the liberal party logically demanded its gradual disappearance, for it had fulfilled its historic function, and to be still useful had to change itself and give place to something else.'

But was this triumph of the liberal party much more than a projection of the triumph of liberalism inside his own mind? And was his explanation of its disappearance more than the rationalization of a fundamental weakness in moral fibre that eclipsed a historic party just at the moment when its wisdom and moderation and sense of tradition were most needed? Croce later called himself, and correctly, the leader of intellectual anti-fascism; but one martyr like Matteotti was worth many liberals to the anti-fascist myth.

An enemy (Edmondo Cione) who was in 1922 Croce's favoured disciple and guest tells us that any talk against fascism used then to send him into a rage. We can check his opinions through interviews he gave to the press on the likelihood of return to parliamentary government (*Pagine Sparse*, vol. II, pp. 371-406).

(October 1923) . . . Matteo Visconti once said he would return to power in Milan only when the sum of beastliness in those who had replaced him had exceeded his own. You can apply this saying yourself to present-day Italy, and let me add that it will not be easy to exceed in a hurry the sum of beastliness committed in post-war Italy. In fact, however, the question does not arise of liberalism against fascism, only that of political forces. Where for instance are the forces that can now oppose and succeed fascism? I do not see any. But I do see a great fear of any eventual return to the parliamentary paralysis of 1922. No sensible person wants any change if that will be the result . . . I am, and could not be other than, liberal. How could he not be a liberal whose mind was formed in the first 50 years of new united Italy? For this reason, though I refuse to defend liberalism or any political party on theoretic grounds, yet I strongly assert it as real for me. And as for me, I have no need to defend it, that is to say no need to back it with sophistries and bad arguments. I hope from my heart that Italians will restore the liberal party as it was once, and that they will find in devotion to the country a way to heal the schisms which weaken and pervert it. There is no contradiction between such a liberal faith and the acceptance and justification of fascism. If the liberals have not had the force and *virtù* to save Italy from the anarchy in which it lay, they must bewail the fact and recite their *mea culpa*, and meanwhile accept what is good from any quarter that it may come, and prepare themselves for the future. But I do not think they also have the duty to become fascists. That would be to take on the personality of men who have a different temperament and have undergone different experiences and belong for the most part to a younger generation. They would make bad fascists, while they can be good liberals and so render good service to Italy now and in the future.

In another interview of January 1924 he hoped that the fascists would get their majority in the elections and so be able to continue their work of 'restoration'. In appearance the new electoral system might look violent and unconstitutional, but in practice this was the only way to get a majority.

If the victorious party is able to form a new parliament with a majority, it is obvious that we shall then have entered again into legality and good constitutional practice . . . The heart of fascism is love of Italy, the safety of the state, and the true conviction that the state without authority is no state at all . . . It is overcoming the traditional indifference of Italians to politics . . . And I value so highly the cure which Italy is undergoing from

fascism that I rather hope the patient will not get up too soon from his bed and risk some grave relapse.

Fascist ideology did not worry him: firstly, he doubted if it had one, and did not think this dangerous; secondly, all ideologies were utopian, seldom realized, and so irrelevant.

Though Matteotti for one spoke against the illegalities of this election, the liberals helped Mussolini to get his huge majority. In a third interview of July 1924, a few weeks after Matteotti's murder, Croce was more convinced that fascism was sterile of new institutions or a new type of state, yet still not aware of its hollowness or its menace, but rather persuaded that fascism like everything else that happened was serving some essentially beneficent purpose which historians would one day clarify.

In my opinion it could not and ought not to be anything else than a bridge for the restoration of a more severe and more authoritarian liberal regime, Fascism ought to give up its attempt to inaugurate a new epoch; but it might well keep the satisfaction and glory of giving tone and vigour once more to Italian political life . . . The Fates lead those who willingly follow them, and drag those who go unwillingly . . . One cannot determine with certainty at what precise moment we ought to call a halt in this series of violent proceedings . . . We could neither expect nor wish that fascism should fall suddenly. It has answered real needs and done much good, as every balanced mind will recognize. It advanced with the consent and applause of the nation. So that on the one hand the people do not wish to see lost the benefits it has brought them, nor to return to the weakness and inconclusiveness that preceded it; and on the other hand people see that the interests created by fascism, even those neither praiseworthy nor beneficial, are at the same time real and have come to stay. Therefore the process of transformation must take time. This is the significance of the prudent and patriotic vote of approval we gave in the Senate . . . The fascists, if they realize how inescapable is the return to a liberal regime, will save their own system as a strong, salutary element in future political struggles. And they will have destroyed a slippery, insecure fascism to create one more durable.

In 1925 Croce was expressing 'remorse' and 'mortification' that the liberal majority in the Senate should have repeatedly given moral support to this gangster rule in these early years when such support meant much. It is therefore surprising to find (now he has changed his mind about fascism) that he makes it out to be of foreign origin, completely unrelated to Italian history, and successful in Italy only because of foreign support. 'Mussolini had the homage

of all the world, and especially of English politicians; and I am now (1947) told by people in England that he is still thought a great man by English public opinion, whereas we Italians think him just a vain elementary schoolmaster.' Before harshly judging such credulity and self-righteousness one must remember how for twenty years Croce was, as he says, 'bathed in official lies daily'. It is also true that a regrettably frequent type of Briton in Italy publicly bewails the old days of order and comfort and no strikes, oblivious that these were bought by the slavery of others. But underlying his frequent return to this point there is the suggestion of a sense of guilt, and the need for the consolation of an anti-fascist myth. He even stooped to the argument that the actual murderers of the Rosselli brothers were Frenchmen and not Italians.

Another part of the myth was his constant iteration that fascism was a historical parenthesis or aberration unrelated to the rest of Italian history. This he maintained in the teeth of his philosophical judgment that history was always 'rational', and that historiography should never be defiled by tendentious politics; and it recalls that wish to put the clock back which he has condemned as destructive of the present in which alone the past has life and meaning. Fully justified as he was in classing fascism as not only a *morbus italicus* but a *morbo contemporaneo*, or calling in diversities of history to explain how different was ruthless nazism from fascism with its 'invincibly clownlike aspect': yet it was *antistorico* to write that 'all Italian history gave the lie to fascism'; 'Italians have never in their history sought to oppress other peoples'; or (for the *News Chronicle*) that 'the life of liberty and *civiltà* is the only life that fits Italian national character and traditions of history'. The *risorgimento* he called purely liberal, neither nationalistic nor imperialistic, and Gentile's theories to the contrary 'are not worth confuting, since they clash with the common historical knowledge of all educated people which is worth more than all written history'. Similarly the axis pact with Germany was 'against all our national traditions' (even the 1866 war and the triple alliance?)

We Italians were never reconciled to fascism, and though slaves were yet angry slaves. Who could dare to call Italy sister to the Germany of Bismarck and Hitler — two nations so different in face and in family? It may be that other nations will catch the fascist disease, but Italy never again you may be quite sure; for Italy has suffered it once and is absolutely vaccinated against its return (*Pagine Politiche*, 1945, p. 115).

If fascism had happened in America it would have been far worse than with us, for Italy is a country of ancient civilization and can throw off the disease more easily than others (*Pensiero Politico e Politica Attuale*, 1946, p. 149).

These opinions were both historically naïve and logically absurd by false analogy, as well as being actually blind, in view of the prospects of survival for liberalism in Italy today. They were of course just what he would have *liked* to be true. Without the conspicuous evidence they would need, and which Croce never gave, we may call them just a political riposte to the fascist mountebanks who claimed against him one aspect of the *risorgimento*. Croce himself has never properly tackled the history of the *risorgimento*, though repeatedly he bewailed the hagiographic uplift-poetry that went for its history in Italy. But perhaps if he had only overcome his temperamental antipathy to Garibaldi, Mazzini, Gioberti and the clericals of the Right, he would have found in their day enough of the ancestry of fascism to be ready for it when it came. His own unpreparedness was in part a failure of historical penetration.

How then was he to explain this 'interlude'? Apart from the wicked foreigners there was first the king: his 'responsibility' was greater than that of Mussolini, who was 'a poor ignorant devil intoxicated with success, while the king had been accurately educated and had governed a liberal Italy'. Then there was D'Annunzio's excitant effect on the young, his aeromania, his Garibaldian capture of Fiume, and the deeper corruption of his novels and his *sogno della sanguinaria e lussuriosa rinascenza Borgiana*. Then there were the democrats whose creed led via demagogy to dictatorship. There was the Left generally, for fascists had an almost purely marxist origin. 'Fascism was by no means the defence against communism that might be thought from Mussolini's lies, but rather a preparation for it, or a substitute that incorporated its worst elements.' 'It was not worth confuting' the fascist claim to derive from the political Right. The Pope certainly was guilty, not only for vetoing the return to power of Giolitti, the one experienced, liberal statesman who might have avoided the catastrophe, but by openly mobilizing the forces of the Church to back 'the man sent by Providence' against liberalism. As for the Catholic left wing, the popular movement of *la democrazia cristiana*, liberals preferred alliance with fascism against it, because it combined the evils of being both democratic and papal with the illogical and so insincere and dangerous attempt to make a monstrous fusion of the two. One suspects that for Croce Catholicism remained the most dangerous enemy of all, for it was thoroughly and on principle necessarily illiberal, whereas fascism was much less clever and but an opportunist pastiche of contradictions which he for a time thought might be serving the best interests of Italy.

It is a fine tribute to Croce's honesty and courage that while many early anti-fascists soon found good reasons why they should climb on the band wagon, he should have done exactly the opposite. His

first divergence had been intellectual, for his training fitted him to sense the cultural disease while it blinded him to its politics. The modern authoritarians were to be opposed not because authoritarian (that was a welcome quality) but because they had become irreligious and materialistic. As late as 1927 Croce was writing of Mussolini's 'pronounced ability' and 'political acumen', but he revolted against the dictator's ignorance which was invincible and disastrous. While liberals were politically still ministers under Mussolini, Croce had by 1923 split off from Gentile, and had called attention to the dangerous muddle-headedness, the cultural nationalism, the miscellaneous *mystiques* of race and Spenglerian decline, the adulation of ignorant youth which were reducing Italy to the intellectual level of the *Duce* and other elementary school teachers. He abhorred the illogical mixtures with which fascism covered its nakedness: reaction and bolshevism, unbelief and clericalism, mysticism and cynicism, ultra-modern as well as antiquated ideas, professed reverence for Law and violation of all laws. Mussolini used culture only for export. At home intellectuals were dangerous and one *squadrista* was officially stated to be worth two philosophers.

Apart from vulgar defamation, and one invasion of his house by rowdies which his wife miraculously dispersed, Croce was left in peace. He wondered why, but the reason is obvious. Once fascism was safely in the saddle his opposition was harmless, and even a useful advertisement abroad of the *Duce's* tolerance. There was a real fear of touching someone with such a world reputation, and (like the attitude of some Italian anti-clericals to the Pope) a pride of possession. It is said that on one occasion Mussolini thought seriously of curing this intractable philosopher with hemlock. But he offered positive advantages to the regime as a good monarchist, a good conservative, a good patriot who had gone on record for his country right or wrong and was quick to defend the military reputation of Italy, a good imperialist, a useful check to the church, the leading anti-communist writer, a considerable dollar asset, and a believer in bowing to the apparently inevitable once it had happened. He had admitted in 1922 the necessity of temporary dictatorship, and even when in opposition refused to take the gloves off, like most liberals ineffective and averse from action. He was incapable of organization and conspiracy, not interested in mass movements, and was useful to deter people from active opposition to that 'humorous story opposition' which dictators often value. With his restricted circulation he seemed politically innocuous, like a restricted dispensation from the Index. Official patronage was withdrawn in 1933 when his books were taken from the school syllabus where they might have corrupted youth, and *La Critica* from libraries. Croce was himself expelled from learned academies, if not from the British Academy.

He wrote for the Encyclopedia Britannica but not for the equally famous Enciclopedia Italiana. This, however, was less persecution than professional jealousy and spite, and on the whole his opposition was discounted or ignored.

As for this opposition, he wrote to Minister Ercole that it was always loyal, in that he discountenanced sabotage and even refused the secret invitation of leading fascists to join the movement and reform or corrode it from within. It was always moderate and in good taste, 'as befitted so grave and delicate a situation'. It was never a party opposition, he maintained, for otherwise how could he have written dispassionately the *History of Naples* to help both fascists and non-fascists with enlightenment on southern questions? In a lecture at Oxford he compared himself to Boethius trying to conserve old traditions and civilize the barbarians. Though he lent an ear to conspiracy it was rather from the fear of seeming timid or discouraging, and he had little faith in underhand work 'even when it may be necessary'. If other anti-fascists misunderstood this position it was 'because many of them carry in their blood the same *politicalism* of the fascists, and despise the effectiveness of a life of religion and philosophy and criticism, and go on thinking of history as a blind struggle merely of economic interests'.

His writing, on the other hand, was designed not as propaganda but as clarification of the spiritual issues: for as an intellectual he had the 'sole duty of research and criticism such as would help men of all parties on to a higher spiritual level where the necessary conflicts can be more profitably fought out'. The next step of *action* would belong rather to some political genius, and these always turn up when the world wants them as badly as we do. For this reason Croce's 'boiling political passion' against fascism had to be canalized into a defence of truth and culture by calm good sense, logic and irony. The Anti-British campaign over sanctions in 1937 was thus met almost automatically by an enthusiastic translation and commentary on Manley Hopkins, the outbreak of war in 1940 by another on Burns. For *La Critica* went on without sequestration, solid and difficult, scrutinizing the whole of Italian life in a bi-monthly audit that let nothing past which was shoddy or cheap, bringing a liberal interpretation to all the major problems of ethics and politics. 'It was the one surviving form of opposition in Italy, a secret bond between all like-minded men, an opposition that was fundamental and radical, excluding all concession or compromise, and yet keeping the calm dignity which was necessary to obtain respect.' And meanwhile the faithful and courageous Giovanni Laterza of Bari went on publishing all the books Croce recommended to him, and together they kept alive some liberty of thought and expression, to preserve for Italy a priceless sense of balance and continuity and political wisdom.

Everyone knew that not only culturally, but also politically, Croce was carrying on an opposition which, if subdued, was never subjugated. He voiced this openly to the last free liberal congress in June 1925 at Rome, quoting to them Luther's protest at Worms; and the counter manifesto he then wrote against that of the 'fascist intellectuals' received hundreds of signatures. Fascism after two years had turned out to be an onagocracy, a government by wild asses unknown to Aristotle's classification. Croce now voted in the Senate against the press laws, the special tribunals, the death penalty, the new electoral law and that suppressing freedom of association. In 1929, on one of his more and more infrequent appearances, his was the only speech in either House against the Vatican concordat, punctuated by the reverend senators with *rumori vivissimi* of a different kind to those which greeted Mussolini's reply. He wrote openly against the repugnant stupidity of nationalism, against the claim that the Roman tradition was specially Italian and not European, and repeatedly against the senselessness of anti-semitism. Authoritarianism he now attacked at one remove in socialism or the Church, in Russian czars and Russian communism. At least till the axis pact he could write against Germany's 'religion of the state, a dark and terrible idol, fantastically remote from human life and seeking to challenge and override it'. Another favourite text was that Napoleon, whose example 'in our times' was still powerful for evil, should be judged like other dictators by the same moral standards as other men.

In 1934 Croce confessed that he saw no way out of the morass. And four years later he wrote: 'What our astounded eyes look on today is outside all that my generation was educated to. The accumulation of horrors and the impossibility of opposing them in any adequate way, induces in people a sort of resignation that resembles torpor and indifference. And this fills me with grief.' But if his optimism was at last damped, there was never the slightest feeling of submission. He enjoined the thinker and poet not to live unworthily in private life fearful of the contamination of politics on his art, nor resignedly to follow the apparent drift of the world, but to act always and solely so as not to be ashamed of himself. On the other hand, always intolerable were those thinkers veined with political tendencies who preached of race and the ethical state to please the men in power. Of nazism he wrote in 1937 that one could not blame the German people

who were labouring under certain needs with which history had charged them, and so comforted themselves with myth and fantasy. But the *signori professori* were not the people, and they had no right to spread untruths and betray the trust

for which society paid them. They were culpable who from fear of real or imaginary dangers, and from the wish to be left alone to their studies, made the first tiny compromise with their conscience, hoping it would be the only one . . . and blushing seemed to ask pity or even pardon, promising to sin no more. For so doing they cheapened themselves for ever, and broke inside them the delicate spring of their work . . . Our job as intellectuals is patiently, inexorably to pick out each weed that shows itself in the garden of knowledge and culture. And for my part that has always been my object, taking no joy in it, but as an unpleasant duty (*La Critica*, 1937, pp. 77-8).

In Italy the 1931 oath had been refused by Ruffini and twelve other professors who preferred resignation to wearing a black shirt on degree day. Croce himself was happy in the possession of a large private fortune that spared him some of these temptations.

The *signori professori*, however, with their vital task of keeping alive old ideals, should not fritter away their energies on vain rebellion, but work for and preach the inevitable resurgence of liberty. If the world should undergo one or two centuries 'or even a thousand years' of servitude, this would be but as yesterday. 'In the certainty that freedom must rise again, in this endurance of death for the sake of greater life, humanity was truly animated with a militant and heroic spirit.' 'Everything was always working towards liberty even when it did not appear so, and liberty was found in every thought or action that contained truth and goodness and poetry.' 'It answered to a fundamental need of man that nothing could remove.'

In this belief Croce found the consolations of philosophy. He has even been heard laughingly to give thanks to fascism for providing him once more with that leisure from politics necessary for thought. His best work on Dante, Shakespeare and Corneille fills these years, the 'spiritual bath of thought and poetry' wherein he retempered his spirit to return serene to the humble and ungrateful tasks waiting outside. As a philosopher he would not vainly protest or judge the present catastrophe, for one could never say that without a certain event things would have gone better or we should have been better people; but certain of the future he would wait till the heavens had cleared, till we could see if in all this childish folly and destruction there was not some goodness. It was in historical research that Croce found 'the best way to serve the liberal cause', and it was about 1924 that he turned to writing what is usually called history. Not only was it that without plunging into history you might fail to grasp the meaning of speculative ideas, but recent events had now given him clearer sight into the past and more need to discover its

implications. Even though he would fight for Italy 'right or wrong', he would never willingly let his history leave the strictly impartial path to become anti-fascist. English historians had learned from the secular, world-wide experience of English liberty that history, if always liberal, was never so in any party sense: continental historians, he said, even liberals like Michelet, seldom learned as much. Yet for all Croce's vaunted detachment, his own histories had each an acknowledged political motive: he wrote on the baroque age to protest against modern flirting with counter-reform, absolutism and sensual art; on Italian history 1871-1915 to heal the breach of tradition wrought by war and dictatorship; and the book Acton might have written on nineteenth-century Europe to show that liberty was inescapably everywhere. His enemies and some of his friends would call this propaganda; and how, if history is to be not chronicle but interpretation, could he avoid exaggerating against fascism the strength and virtues of parliamentary Italy? So doing Croce found at once his escape from and his most effective opposition to tyranny.

Of Croce's attitude to the profound convulsions of the last ten years we cannot yet be fully sure, and often it is too politically bitter for philosophic serenity. His profound disillusion with Germany began before 1939. There is evidence that like his disciple Collingwood he sided with the Spanish republicans. He spoke bitterly against the shame of Munich. Of the axis war he repeated what he had said in 1915 that it was useless to search for moral right or wrong; you just had to help your side to win. His private advice to Italian soldiers was 'to do their military duty both for their own dignity and to impose respect on their enemies, and so work towards a better future for Italy'. Here we see that Tragedy can follow logical as well as moral failure, for the philosopher and politician in Croce were each in opposite camps, and if he did not work for allied victory at least he had to wish for it. His old theory of war had not allowed for civil wars of religion, nor his theory of politics for his country being 'wrong'. Now it was with shame and dismay that Italians watched their leaders declare war on beaten France, and with a 'shudder of horror' had seen England for a few weeks of 1940 on the brink of an abyss:

England that is not only of the English, but one of the fundamental supports of the modern world, master of liberty, as Rome was of law, educator of entire populations all over the world, courageous and balanced, skilful and nobly humane: and our hearts rose with hers when with a new and severe mode of life she stood resolute for battle, and we all trembled and mourned at the ruin of her cities and the slaughter of her people (*Pagine Politiche*, p. 105).

The question then arises, if modern wars are not national but civil and religious, if to defend liberty we may fight our countrymen, did this not mean that after all philosophy can teach us politics, and that liberal politics are somehow philosophically right? Croce, for one, still refused to draw this conclusion.

The tragedy followed its course through to the defeat of Italy. His diary for August 27th, 1943 runs: the news of the armistice so excited me that I could do nothing the whole day. Joy? No, only the feeling that at last we are out of the labyrinth with a clear road ahead even if a *via dolorosa*. Croce hints that he had made repeated efforts to induce the king to throw over his wicked past and make the armistice sooner. He even claimed that Italians overthrew fascism 'without waiting for the allied arms to crush it' and should therefore count among the victors; but this no doubt was only what he had hoped would happen. In fact the king cravenly delayed his initiative till after the Sicilian landing, and (Croce answers his own claim) 'until he saw fascism was already dead and could no longer support his dynastic interests'. Then with the fall of Mussolini Croce became the oracle, feeling without fascism like Peter Schlemil without his shadow, bitterly distraught at the continuing havoc of liberation, and the wanton burning in reprisal by the Germans of the priceless Neapolitan archives. To his house for advice came the British minister Macmillan, and there Vishinsky received an inscribed copy of his treatise against Marx. He even entered the cabinet in the ministry of Marshal Badoglio.

But his chief task was to rebuild the liberal party, for he now preached the duty of everyone to join a party, however much they might hope that liberty would soon return to its place, as in England, 'a presupposition of all parties, a deity always present and working but no longer an object of strife'. The liberal party, he said, should go back to the radicalism of Cavour, free from all conservative accretions, and no longer tied to social or class interests. He insisted that liberals were politically in the Centre, for that was where his philosophy told him they *ought* to be. Yet in practice Croce himself went over more and more to the right as his party grew smaller, and the narrow intolerance of that party's liberalism appeared at the Oxford liberal congress of 1946. Crocian intellectuals deserted him for the two enemies he had many times argued out of existence; the *democristiani* and the popular front were more consonant with the realities of politics. Croce had not found for his disciples a satisfactory explanation of how philosophic liberalism was related to a liberal party; nor had he been able to practice his precept and adapt nineteenth-century liberalism to a new world; nor had he given liberals that triumphant sense of an urgent mission with a clear practical policy. He now realized his own failure as a politician, and while

holding to politics as a duty, confessed that he could not be counted on for any great or creative political activity.

Latterly Croce has disagreed with his party and returned almost entirely to his study, where at the age of 81 he still works a ten-hour day. From the *Sunday Times* he learnt that even the victor states have more or less lost the belief and practice of liberty, and for such a world-wide crisis deeper work was needed than the sterile, petty jockeying for place which went for party politics. Moreover, he believes that Italy has in matters of thought and *civiltà* a pre-eminence which 'has preserved for her a greater mental and moral balance than other countries' and gave her a special part to play. It had long been his wish to rest from active work and surround himself with students to whom he could impart all the 'little trade secrets', and now part of his Neapolitan *palazzo* with its magnificent library has become a post-graduate residential college where he hopes that foreigners also may care to come and study history and philosophy with young Italians. There, if they cannot learn from him the nature of the new world and how to face it, they can learn how politics in the broader sense demands an understanding of the living past. The philosopher has triumphed over the politician. The man whom Gramsci called 'the lay Pope of Italian life' has returned to his own.

VICTOR COUSIN AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY EDUCATION

R. R. BOLGAR

VICTOR COUSIN was admired by his contemporaries because they thought him a brilliant writer and a philosopher of genius. Maine de Biran and Schelling, Jacobi and Hegel, who were his friends, accepted him apparently without hesitation as an intellectual equal. Thiers used to value his advice. Mérimée praised his books. And the news of his death moved even Sainte-Beuve, whose judgments on fellow academicians were exceptionally cautious, to say that he had been one of the best French thinkers and a stylist certain of immortal fame. But for once Sainte-Beuve was wrong.

Posterity has revised these laudatory opinions with brutal thoroughness. As a philosopher, as a writer of elegant essays, Cousin has been deservedly forgotten, or is remembered only by those who can enjoy denigrating one-time celebrities. The coherence of the metaphysical system which he introduced under the misleading title of Eclecticism has been successfully called into question; and the Ciceronian periods which enthralled his audiences in the Sorbonne of 1829, have come to strike our brisker taste as merely dull.

We admire him for other achievements. When he entered the *École Normale* in 1810, higher instruction in Arts and Science was still a rarity. The provincial faculties functioned for the most part only as examination boards serving the local schools. In Paris, the Sorbonne lectures needed to be held in the evenings when the professors could rely on the general public to provide them with an audience; and all the courses, except those in law and medicine, had what we should call nowadays an extra-mural character. It was Cousin who did more than anyone else to alter these amateurish institutions under whose aegis his lecturing had begun. Dismissed in 1820 because of his Liberalism and then reinstated by Martignac, he had great power in the University after the July Revolution. He held a number of key posts, many of them simultaneously, rose to be Minister of Public Instruction in 1840 and contributed materially to a long series of reforms. By the time he retired in 1852, the faculties and schools, which Napoleon had left in such an unsatisfactory condition, were organized much as they are today.

In 1812 Cousin was appointed an instructor at the *École Normale*, and, except for the one break from 1822 to 1828, he held the post until his retirement. He held it all the time that he was lecturing at the Sorbonne; and it was his *École Normale* class, not his lectures, which

formed the focus of his teaching activity. To regard his lectures as representing the sum total of his achievement, to consider him exclusively as a metaphysician and to dismiss him as a bad metaphysician, is to allow him less credit than is his just due. His lectures were merely the efflorescence, the open manifesto of the private instruction he was giving to his little group of future school-masters; and this instruction achieved remarkable effects, independent of its value as a course in metaphysics. It transformed the spirit in which Frenchmen approached philosophy. Cousin found philosophers amateurs and left them professionals.

The *École Normale* had opened its doors in 1810. For the first time in French history the young men who intended to spend their lives teaching in secondary schools were being collected year by year inside the walls of a single institution for the purposes of training. They were intelligent and ambitious. Having chosen a career, even though some of them chose it because they could not afford medicine or the law, they desired to see it widely respected. They wanted the rewards to which their talents entitled them. They wanted a professional status similar to that of a doctor or lawyer; and Cousin became their champion.

But where they were content with vague aspirations, he had definite plans. He realized that if teachers of philosophy were to achieve the status accorded by common consent to professional men, then courses in philosophy would need to reproduce certain characteristics of the existing professional disciplines. In medicine, for example, the student of the time was being asked to memorize a great number of details which required for their mastery, not only intelligence, but a steady application maintained over a period of years. This meant that not everybody could aspire to be a doctor; for not everybody had the requisite mental power, the money or the time. It meant too that an unbridgeable gap separated the man who had completed his medical training from his untrained rivals. He was safe from their competition. Legal studies were similarly organized; and the trained lawyer was therefore in a similarly favourable position. But philosophy as Cousin found it in 1815 made no such demands and in consequence could offer its students no such security. It had been during the eighteenth century and during the first decade of the nineteenth the leisure occupation of speculatively inclined gentlemen. Cousin himself had learnt from Royer-Collard and Laromiguière, whose knowledge was limited to the problems discussed on Tuesday evenings in Maine de Biran's drawing-room. Such discussions were within the reach of every educated man. One's success or failure in them depended on one's natural ingenuity of mind. There was no question of practice resulting in an improvement which the untutored could not challenge. There was nothing to

separate the sheep from the goats, the professionals from the rank amateurs.

Cousin changed all that. Gradually, and guided more by an intuitive appreciation of what was required than by a clearly formulated analysis of the problems involved, he transformed the character of his courses at the *École Normale* and the Sorbonne. Where his predecessors had been in the habit of spending a term or more on the discussion of epistemological difficulties, a procedure which he too had followed during his early years, he eventually substituted far-ranging historical surveys which familiarized the student with a multitude of key questions and provided for each question a variety of defensible solutions. He created by this means a body of specialized knowledge, sufficient in size and complexity to form the basis of an imposing discipline. In 1814 students had been asked to think; in 1828 they were told to learn facts and techniques in order to make philosophical thought possible. By that time, graduates in philosophy could claim that their craft too, just like the older disciplines, required years of work to acquire and should place them in a category apart. They could form a closed corporation difficult of access and unchallenged by competing outsiders. They could rely on their metaphysics to keep them warm.

After the July Revolution, Cousin, the favourite disciple of Royer-Collard, the friend of Thiers, the victim of reaction who was known to have been dismissed from his post by the French Government and arrested for his Liberalism by the German police, came into favour, and his field of activity was greatly enlarged. Within three years, he became a Peer of France, a State Councillor, Professor of Philosophy and a member of the Council for Public Instruction. In 1830 an educational appointment was no sinecure. The Revolution had suppressed the old universities, and its secularizing policy had destroyed many of the eighteenth-century schools. 'What did the French Revolution contribute', Matthew Arnold was to ask, 'in the cause of popular education?' 'Un déluge de mots,' M Guizot replied, 'rien de plus.' At the turn of the century, not one child in fifty was learning so much as to read and write. In 1830, inspectors sent to report on rural conditions found one district where three out of every four teachers were illiterate.

Some of this disorder was due to the Revolution, a point which M de Montalembert was careful to emphasize. But even if the educational system of the eighteenth century had survived intact, there can be no doubt that its institutions would have proved grossly inadequate faced with the new needs of the post-revolutionary age. The nineteenth century had brought to France a new culture which set the educator problems of a magnitude and a complexity unseen before. The scientific and historical discoveries of the previous two

hundred years were making their impact. Ever since 1810 public opinion had been pressing urgently for the inclusion of fresh subjects in the curricula of the legal and medical schools; and that was only one of the many reforms demanded. The provision of higher education could no longer be restricted to the traditional categories. Government and bank officials, schoolmasters, civil and military engineers, and even the private gentlemen who pulled their weight in municipal politics, were performing tasks every whit as complicated as the lawyers, doctors, and theologians. It had become evident that they required a training every whit as arduous. Where the eighteenth century had three learned professions, the nineteenth discovered a full dozen.

But the difficulties raised by the education of the middle classes paled into insignificance beside the problems involved in educating the poor. The new industries were offering a large number of skilled and semi-skilled jobs which the untrained and illiterate could not fill so that workers and employers alike were agitating for technical schools, somewhat on the lines of the English Mechanics Institutes, or if these could not be had, then at least for that modicum of general instruction which would make it possible for an ambitious worker to train himself. In a world where professional skill could win glittering prizes, the underprivileged had naturally come to regard education as the easiest road to happiness. They demanded schools with the same vigour that the Roman populace had demanded bread. Moreover, some of them, who had fallen under the influence of the Saint-Simonians, were holding views which appeared to their betters criminally unrealistic. They had daydreams about education and saw it, not as a few disconnected items of knowledge hammered into the heads of unwilling children by an underpaid teacher in a dusty school, not as a utilitarian workshop training planned by an employer to produce skilful mechanics, but as a social technique, wider in its scope and more profound in its effects than a revolution, which would lead them in the course of a very short time, without blood and with very little sweat, to a universal equality. All these popular expectations pressed much harder upon the Liberals than upon their Catholic opponents whose dearest wish was to return to the past. For the Liberals believed in industry and competition and material prosperity. They had to make the society which rested on these foundations capable of life.

As soon as they came to power, and although they were hindered by internal dissensions, they attacked the educational problem boldly. It was here that Cousin made himself most useful. He became an expert on the administrative and organizational intricacies of the University. Having, so far as education was concerned, one foot in the executive and another in the legislature, he could use his

experiences as an academic functionary to buttress his debating points in the Senate, while his prestige as a politician regularly overshadowed his colleagues on university committees. Benefiting from this advantage, he had his say on every single measure which dealt with the faculties or the schools.

We find him, for example, proposing to extend to Arts and Science the *agrégation* as it had developed in the faculty of medicine. In the medical schools, the young doctors who had been chosen as *agrégés* by public examination had certain important privileges. They alone were allowed to lecture alongside the professors under faculty auspices. They alone were allowed to replace the professors when these were ill or absent. And, the most pertinent point of all, the candidates for professorships had always to be chosen out of their number. Cousin realized the significance of this institution. He saw that by its means the faculty lecturers in every branch could be given a professional status, similar in type, if hierarchically superior, to the one he had created earlier in his career for the teachers of philosophy. He wanted *agrégés* in every faculty; he wanted them to have a monopoly of teaching rights in higher education; and he wanted them recruited publicly by some test which demanded a high standard of intelligence developed by steady and long-continued effort. The rewards were to be for those who had natural gifts and knew how to use them. It is also worth noting, as an indication of the quality of Cousin's mind, that his planning had an unexpected multiplicity. This reform we have mentioned was calculated, not only to effect the purposes outlined above, but also to solve simultaneously another and quite separate problem. In nearly every faculty, the students were demanding additions to the curriculum. The young lawyers, to take only one example, were clamouring for courses on Roman Antiquities, on canon and on criminal law; and as things were, the authorities had not the means to satisfy them. Cousin pointed out that here again the *agrégation* could provide a solution. Every *agrégé* who chose to settle in a town where his faculty was established would have the right to lecture unpaid for that faculty. And if it was made known that paid posts would be given primarily to those who had shown themselves successful without payment, nearly everyone would take advantage of this privilege. These unofficial lecturers could then be guided to select those new subjects for which there was a demand. It was surprising with what neatness the pieces of the jigsaw fell into shape.

He had what amounted to a passion for killing two educational birds with a single administrative stone. There existed in France at this period a body of men styled Health Officers. They were in fact doctors, but of an inferior kind. They received their appointments after a much shorter course than was required for a doctorate in the

faculty of medicine, and the baccalaureat was not demanded from them as a preliminary qualification. Men who did not feel themselves capable of studying for a degree, who could not spare the time or meet the fees, or whose parents had not troubled to send them to a *lycée*, became Health Officers, and as such entered into competition with properly trained doctors. The medical profession which was trying hard to maintain its rigorous standards, which required from the student considerable intellectual ability, effort and financial outlay, found itself threatened by these rivals whose own education had been meaner in its scope, cheaper and easier. There were protests; and the complaints of the doctors were backed by Cousin who spoke in the Senate to recommend that the recognition accorded to Health Officers should be withdrawn. He showed himself as always a zealous guardian of professional interests. But, as he noted, more than professional interest was at stake. He reminded the hesitating Senators that a doctor needed to be something more than a technician. A longer and more theoretical training, especially if it were preceded by secondary school, would guarantee the possession of the necessary modicum of general knowledge. For, whenever he spoke or wrote about the education of the well-to-do classes, he always took the view that the members of the principal professions ought not only to shine in their specialities, but to be eminent also as men. He wanted them to have an understanding of the world which would place them above the common run of their fellows. He wanted to see the separate professions united into a professional class possessed of a stock of knowledge, a mastery of affairs, denied to outsiders. Like Saint-Simon, he saw in such a class the nursery of France's future rulers; but unlike Saint-Simon, he realized that rulers too required training.

It was for this reason that he made himself the advocate of a scheme, which he pressed in season and out, to establish in France universities on the English or German model. French higher education still retained, after more than thirty years, the form given it by Napoleon. It was based on faculties scattered singly in the separate provincial towns so that, except in Paris, the students did not come in effective contact with any branch of learning but their own. No bonds could be formed between the specialities, lacking what Newman was to call 'the collision of mind with mind and knowledge with knowledge'; and so no opportunities existed for the formation of a unified professional outlook. Cousin made proposal after proposal that these faculties should be rescued from their isolation and grouped together in six or seven important centres, in universities which would then be the repositories of an intellectual tradition, where young men would come, not merely to learn facts, but where they would subtly, painlessly and often unwittingly, make their

own the culture, the opinions, and the basic presuppositions, of the newly dominant French middle class. While he was Minister, he tried to create an experimental university by adding to the faculty of law at Rennes faculties of medicine and science and a training college. But when the Cabinet to which he belonged was driven to resign, his policy, which had the support of Guizot, was reversed by Villemain. The French universities as we know them today, did not come into being until the end of the century, when the social difficulties which Cousin had foreseen were making themselves seriously felt.

He was similarly ahead of his time in his plans for elementary education. Many of his colleagues were opposed to the popular demand for schools. Views differed as to the amount of instruction that was to be given, whether it was to be restricted to the three Rs, whether civilians or clerics were to be entrusted with the tasks of teaching, and how they were to be controlled. Cousin was on the committee which reported on these questions, and we have a record of the suggestions which he made. The law of 1833 put only half of them into effect.

This law was based on the principles that elementary instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic should be given, freely where necessary, to all who asked for it, and that teachers should be properly qualified and subject to regular inspection. It was also agreed, but rather more reluctantly, by the two Chambers that there should be in every *département* a primary school of a more advanced type, where simple geometry, history, geography, and composition, should be taught in addition to the three Rs. This was a modest programme, and we know that Cousin had championed much bolder measures. He had been sent in 1831 to inspect the educational systems of Germany and Holland which were regarded as possible models for France; and in his report¹ he had advised the provision of many more advanced primary schools than were eventually sanctioned and had proposed a much more ambitious curriculum. Also, in the case of the ordinary primary schools, he had made strong representations, to which nobody paid much attention, about the importance of moral instruction.

In short, he had advocated more thorough and more elaborate measures than a couple of heterogeneous assemblies had been willing to consider.

The politicians who guided the fortunes of the July Monarchy, only half-understood the problems of their age. They habitually mistook the shadow for the substance; and the fundamental antagon-

¹ *De l'instruction publique dans quelques pays de l'Allemagne et particulièrement en Prusse*, 1831.

De l'instruction publique en Hollande, 1833.

isms implicit in the structure of French society, were left to express themselves in conflicts over irrelevant trifles. Deputies and senators alike were content to be wise only in the ways of personal interest and to avoid all theorizing. They were content to talk in crude terms about a straightforward antagonism between the rich on the one hand and the poor on the other. Or, like Dr Arnold, they divided the latter according to a moral criterion into the good poor and the bad. Cousin shared the beliefs of his colleagues. He shared their creditable and discreditable motives. He did not differ from them on any basic issue. But he saw further than they did.

He held certain unusual views on the nature of society, which he never explained in set terms, but which are implicit in all his writings. He saw that his fellow citizens could be usefully divided, not into two, but into three categories, exclusive of the aristocracy which in any case belonged to the past. These categories were: on the one hand, the comparatively small group of property owners and professional men at the peak of the social pyramid; on the other hand, the vast masses of the semi-skilled and unskilled workers, the truly poor, who formed that pyramid's bottom layers; and between the two, the clerks, the skilled artisans, the smallholders, and the less fortunate farmers, that is the great body of the moderately prosperous, constituting a third and essentially separate class. Had he lived half a century later, and had he not been a Liberal, but fallen instead under the influence of Marx, he could have spoken, as Georges Sorel was to do, about a *bourgeoisie*, and a *prolétariat*, and *la classe moyenne* filling the gap between them.

He had also come to certain interesting conclusions about social mobility. Every contemporary observer had noted the fact that now, in post-revolutionary France, able and hard-working men could better their social status and in nearly all cases sought to do so. It had also been noted, though by not quite so many, that the school system could be organized either to promote or to restrict this upward movement. State Education had the choice either of providing opportunities for the energetic, or of placing obstacles in their path. Which course was it to take? The admirers of enterprise recommended the former on the ground that the efforts of an ambitious man to improve his condition were found to contribute to the general prosperity. Their opponents maintained that the existing proportions of the different classes corresponded to economic needs, and any large-scale attempt to encourage social climbing was therefore bound to lead to chaos. Cousin was one of the few who managed to combine these two viewpoints, realizing that neither set of facts could be ignored without disaster. He saw the problem in terms of the donkey and the carrot. The task of governments was to work out how to obtain from each generation the maximum of productive

effort in return for the very small rewards which were all Society could safely offer.

His proposal to establish large numbers of advanced primary schools had its origins in his realizing that there was a genuine intermediate class between the well-to-do and the poor, and in his desire to increase the productive powers of this class while keeping its members from flooding the professions. He did not think it expedient that the moderately prosperous should be compelled to choose for their children's education between the ordinary primary schools and the *lycées*. For, as things were, many of them preferred to strain their slender resources paying for a *lycée* course rather than to send a promising boy where he would be taught only the barest elements; and most of these youngsters who went to the *lycées* eventually competed for entrance to the already overcrowded professions. Those who failed, and they were many, returned to their families disappointed men and misfits whom a curriculum based on the classics had left untrained for the callings they needed to follow. At the same time, the fact that there were no schools offering an education which would prepare men in an adequate fashion for the jobs immediately below the professional level meant that these jobs were less efficiently done than they might have been. The advanced primary schools could have satisfied both these needs, if they had been established on the lines recommended by Cousin. They would have diverted large numbers from the *lycées* who would therefore not have competed for a professional education; and they would have provided the minor official, the retailer and the small farmer with the type of practical knowledge which his job required.

The moral training which Cousin wanted emphasized in elementary instruction, was intended to counteract the discontents of the poor, just as the advanced primary schools were to diminish those of the intermediate class. Whatever divisions existed between the property owners and the skilled artisans, they nevertheless had one important characteristic in common. They could both benefit from a regime of free enterprise; and their support for such a regime could therefore be won by giving them more information about its workings. It was for this reason that Cousin, who believed that the State should use education to secure the adherence of its citizens, had pressed for universities which could provide professional men with a broad general culture, and had asked for subjects such as history and geography in the advanced primary schools. He was convinced that the prosperous and the moderately prosperous merely needed to be told more facts. But the poor — he saw that the poor fell into a different category. They could not be expected to feel much enthusiasm for a regime which left them at the bottom of the economic ladder. Since society could offer them so little, their loyalty could

not be gained by enlightening them about its material advantages. It could be gained, he thought, in one way only, and that was by bringing them to accept on irrational grounds, without any thought of criticism, certain beliefs conducive to the maintenance of good order.

He suggested — and over this matter he was fully in agreement with Guizot — that the teacher's most important task in the primary schools was to inculcate in the children's minds such principles as honesty, sobriety, and obedience, which, once accepted, would keep the bulk of the population from vicious idleness and revolutionary unrest. He realized, however, that their successful inculcation would prove no easy matter since the whole enterprise was bound to hinge on the personality of the teacher, a factor outside the range of administrative controls.

Un bon maître d'école est un homme . . . qui doit vivre dans une humble sphère, et qui pourtant doit avoir l'âme élevée pour conserver cette dignité de sentiments, et même de manières sans laquelle il n'obtiendra jamais le respect et la confiance des familles; qui doit posséder un rare mélange de douceur et de fermeté; car il est inférieur de bien du monde dans une commune, et il ne doit être le serviteur dégradé de personne; n'ignorant pas ses droits, mais pensant beaucoup à ses devoirs; donnant à tous l'exemple, servant à tous de conseiller: surtout ne cherchant point de sortir de son état; content de sa situation, parce qu'il y fait du bien. . . .¹

These were the ideas of Cousin. It is evident that they were based on accurate observations, capably interpreted. They show a rare subtlety of mind. It is therefore an odd and, from some points of view, a tragic fact that in the tangled circumstances of the time they led him gradually step by irremediable step, down the road of a disastrous compromise with his most determined enemies.

He had thought at first that lay teachers would be able to expound moral principles to the poor outside the framework of religion. But he soon saw that, if the primary school teachers were to perform this task effectively, if they were to have the influence which he considered necessary, they would require, on the meagre salary which the State was prepared to pay, something of the other-worldliness and the self-abnegation of a religious order. But such men were rare, and in the nineteenth century not many of them entered the teaching profession. Ambition was the flame which burnt most commonly in the shrines of the *École Normale*.

He remembered his experiences in Germany. There the pastors teaching in the schools were eminently successful in promoting what

¹ *Exposé des Motifs de la loi de 1833*. (Œuvres, 5e série, I. 13)

the founders of Prussian education had dubbed: *die Erhaltung guter Polizei*. Why could not this happen in France? It was plain that in the village school, the Church and the anti-clerical State had the same aims and would require to use the same methods. For some time Cousin continued to oppose Catholic ambitions in higher education, while making it clear that he had no wish to keep the religious orders out of the elementary schools. The stability of the State would be greatly reinforced by the wide-spread acceptance of Christian principles, and in the teaching of these principles the Church had no rival. He tried to establish an understanding with the Curia. The *querelle des bédoux et des cuistres* was to be ended. He was in this frame of mind, when the revolution of 1848 broke out. The disturbances it occasioned made him willing to sacrifice everything to security. And it was then he performed those actions which his friends regarded as a betrayal. It was then that he sat on the extra-parliamentary commission of 1849 and helped without public protest to draft the *loi Falloux* which handed over the effective control of primary education to the Church authorities.

Yet he was no reactionary. His outlook upon life had always taken as its basis the free society which the Revolution had struggled to establish. All his plans, all the reforms he undertook, were dictated by its needs. He was a Liberal as Royer-Collard had been, a Liberal of an older type to whom the beliefs of J. S. Mill would have seemed somewhat strange since he had no immediate interest in the Faustian development of human personality. His world was interpreted in terms of effort and prosperity. Individual enterprise was the surest means of making a society prosperous, and enterprise required for its success initiative and energy. It was therefore necessary to stimulate these by a system of rewards and to see that the rewards, once gained, were adequately guaranteed to their possessors. So he did his utmost to establish professional standards and to protect professional monopolies.

He believed that the happiness of society would be served, if the race went always to the strong. But unlike Guizot, and unlike the English Liberal opponents of Chartism, he mitigated this austere creed since he saw also the other side of the question. He understood that if the State was to be stable, some at least of the aspirations of the under-privileged would require to be satisfied. There were basic economic needs parallel to the basic political needs envisaged by Constant. And he saw that there was a way of satisfying these basic needs within the ambit of the system of effort and reward. He pictured his ideal state as providing limited opportunities for social mobility. The poorest and most ignorant were to send their children to the village school where they would learn to be intelligent workmen. The intelligent worker in his turn was to send his son to

the advanced primary school where he could train for a white-collar occupation; and to the son of the prosperous clerk or shopkeeper who could afford a *lycée*, the world of the professions lay open.

Cousin was perhaps justified in feeling certain that those who were on the ladder of success would in every generation be content with the existing system of private enterprise. As for the rest, he was wise enough to see that they constituted a grave danger. That was the weak point of his system. To meet this danger, he found only the anodyne of moral principles and that religious teaching which was the perquisite of the Church of Rome. For a Liberal of his day, the advocacy of an alliance with clericalism spelt political ruin. His friends left him, and his former enemies were glad to see him fall.

He died in 1867, forgotten after fifteen years in retirement. But through the length and breadth of France the institutions he had created were flourishing, and the neglected needs he had pointed out were making themselves ever more felt. He had argued logically from his premisses. In the case of one all-important problem he had arrived at what was for him an impossible conclusion. But, with that one exception, his policies were vindicated.

ANDERS SØRENSEN VEDEL

HENRY STEELE COMMAGER

1

He was born in 1542 in Vejle, in the kingdom of Denmark, and he took the name of the town for his own. But it was to Ribe that he belonged, Ribe just fifty miles across the heath, but looking boldly to the West, not smugly on the Little Belt. Here he had come as a boy to study in the famous cathedral school; here he lived in the formative years of his youth, and the Old Town threw its spell over him; at the height of his fame it was to Ribe that he returned, and in the shadow of its cathedral he lived the ecstasy of aspiration and the tragedy of frustration. No town like Ribe, town of the Valdemars and of lovely Queen Dagmar; its quays were not so crowded now, nor its market place so busy, but it still had its scholars and churchmen, and in all the kingdom there was no church to compare to the great cathedral, its mighty tower rising far into the heavens so that storm-tossed sailors out on the North Sea could see it from afar and take courage. Here, back in the Dark Ages, Bishop Ansgar had built one of the first churches in the North, and here, seven centuries later, its churchmen had formed the spearhead of the Reformation. The spirit of the mighty Bishop Tavsén still dominated the place, and his disciples filled the canonries and prelaties, preached in the pulpits and taught in the schools.

Jens Grundet's school was famous throughout the kingdom, and young Anders came to study with him and to live with him. It was a severe schooling: he mastered Torrentini and Melancthon's grammar, read Terence and Vergil and Ovid, Cicero's letters and essays, and elementary Greek; logic and rhetoric were not neglected, and the study of the Old and New Testament was taken for granted. But more important than this formal education was the influence of Grundet himself, and of the scholars and ecclesiastics who frequented his table and study. There was Hans Thomesen, director of the cathedral school, who had just published the first Danish hymnal, and Canon Jens Kansler, who had heard Luther himself at Wittenberg, and whose splendid library was always open to likely students, and Hans Svaning who had been tutor to the King and was the first royal historiographer, and who had many daughters. Svaning was busy with a history of Denmark; there was nothing in existence but Krantz's *Chronica*, and even young Vedel knew how wretched that was, and when he read Thucydides and Plutarch and

reflected that Denmark had no such chroniclers, he could not restrain his tears.

In 1561 Hans Thomesen went to teach at the University in Copenhagen, and he took young Vedel with him, and sadly Grundet closed his school; years later Vedel was to pay tribute to this noble scholar and man of learning who had schooled him in the ancient tongues and had not disdained the folk-lore and ballads of the Danish peasantry. In Copenhagen, Vedel listened to the great Niels Hemmingsen, foremost theologian of his age but flirting, already, with heresies. From this dangerous connection he was rescued by his timely appointment as tutor to young Tycho Brahe, four years his junior; within a year the two young gentlemen were on their way to Leipzig to study jurisprudence and theology. But Tycho Brahe had no stomach for jurisprudence, and Vedel little for theology; conscientiously the tutor tried to persuade his noble pupil to abandon the temptations of mathematics and astronomy, but without avail. Soon the two parted company; Tycho Brahe retained a deep friendship for his brilliant and genial tutor, and Vedel never ceased to admire the one Dane of his generation whom he acknowledged his intellectual equal. Rejecting a position with the Elector of Saxony, Vedel journeyed to Wittenberg, the mecca of Danish students of this century as Göttingen was in the eighteenth, and the centre of historical studies. Flaccius had taught here, and Chemnitz and Chytraeus, and here now was the famous Caspar Peucer, who had married the daughter of Melanchthon, and whose versatility was no less astonishing than his learning. He taught mathematics and medicine and history, he had written a continuation of the *Chronici Caronis* which Melanchthon himself had first edited, and he was even then engaged in an investigation of the origin of the name Denmark. Three years Vedel lingered on in Wittenberg; in 1556 he brought out an edition of Jens Grundet's sermons, with a biography and an appreciation of the scholar, and on the basis of this was made Magister.

Back to Copenhagen, then, to become chaplain at the court of the second Frederik who fancied himself a patron of the arts. Vedel was young and handsome and well-connected, his conversation was no less elegant than were his manners, his reputation was already resounding, and soon he was the darling of the court. The great Chancellor Friis, who loved learning no less than power, befriended him, and threw open to him his magnificent library and home; Niels Kaas and Bjorn Andersen, councillors to the King, vied with each other in showing him favour. Tycho Brahe was here, dreaming of Uraniborg, and Niels Hemmingsen, not yet forced into retirement, and Charles Dançey the French legate, a courtier, a man of the world. Vedel was in his element: he revelled in patronage, he

had for the nobility a respect that bordered on reverence, and he stood always ready to do their bidding. His sermons were polished and eloquent, no one could turn out a more graceful poem or a more moving funeral oration, and in time the prospect of an elegy from Vedel became something worth dying for.

Soon there were other demands upon his talents. Friis himself, the Chancellor, brought to him a Danish translation of Platina's *Vita Summorum pontificum* of 1479. A wretched piece of work, this translation: perhaps Vedel could do something with it. So Vedel turned from that investigation into the origin of the name of Yule which was already beginning to bore him, and undertook an entirely new translation of Platina. The book grew under his hands: he added to it and embellished it until it was an original work, and in 1571 it was published as *Antichristus Romanus*, an imposing book of over two hundred pages of rhyme, and Vedel's name was on every tongue. He had done this so well that he was called upon for other things. It was barely fifty years since old Herr Mikkell of Odense had written his *Vita Hominis*, but so rapidly was the Danish language changing that it was with difficulty that the present generation read the book. Dutifully Vedel brought out a new edition, and the very next year he compiled a curious collection of fragments from Greek philosophy. Barely was this pious exercise performed than he was called upon to enter the theological arena. The murmurs against Neils Hemmingsen's heresies were growing more audible; the German churchmen were talking and there were inquiries from the Lutheran princes. To set all these at rest Vedel brought out a Latin translation of Hemmingsen's lectures on dogmatics, *Via Vitae*; it was published, not at Copenhagen, but at Leipzig. Perhaps it was not entirely successful, for Hemmingsen shortly retired.

But these were trivia; it was not for this that he had studied under Grundet and Camerarius and Peucer. Shortly after the publication of the *Vita Hominis* Friis had come to him with a project close to his heart — a Danish translation of the greatest of Danish chronicles — *Saxo Grammaticus*. It was the glory of Danish literature and of Danish history, but it had never been rendered into the vernacular. Christiern Pedersen had tried it, to be sure, but without success, and much had been hoped from the royal historiographer, Hans Svaning. Now Danish nationalism and Danish pride called for a Danish edition, and Vedel was the man for the work. He hesitated, he was modest, he was coy, but finally he was persuaded, and with a high heart and high hopes he set to work on the book that was to insure him immortality.

Vedel's edition of Saxo marks the beginning of Danish literature as Luther's Bible of German. The translation was faithful but idiomatic; in strong, muscular prose Vedel recounted the story of

the Danish kings from Dan to Valdemar the Great; each book was prefaced with a succinct summary of events; a genealogical table of the kings was provided in an appendix, marginal notes added criticism and suggestion, and a lengthy dedication pointed the moral and adorned the tale. From this history we may learn, so Vedel wrote, how the nation has been exalted by Christianity, how God has punished evil-doers and rewarded the godly; we may see how the good king is strengthened by the love of his people, and how infidelity, tyranny and the love of war bring misery. History teaches, too, he continued, that though men and governments may change, human nature does not change mankind in its habits and its customs, and its character remains the same. There was a continuity in history, said Vedel, who himself represented the world that was dying and the world that was coming to life, the medieval and the renaissance.

The book was a national enterprise: it had been sponsored by the Court and the King himself had lent encouragement; Johan Friis had died, but Niels Kaas extended his patronage, and the young scholar was regarded as a national benefactor. When the work was ready for the printers it was discovered that there was not enough paper in the kingdom, and Tycho Brahe himself wrote an appeal to the women of Denmark to give up their linen to the glory of the state and of learning, and the book was printed.

Vedel was a national hero, and neither unaware nor unappreciative of his position. He had written in his dedication: 'it might be that even in our time one might be found who would dare to undertake that which would be to the honour of his God, his King and his country', and he referred to the continuation of Saxo's chronicle, and to himself. He had visited Ribe, and had been excited by Hans Svaning's position and by one of his daughters, and he planned to take both. In 1577 he married the daughter and the same year he began to intrigue for the position of royal historiographer. Svaning had proved a disappointment. In his youth none had been more promising than this farmer lad whom Melanchthon himself had praised. He had returned from Wittenburg to teach at the University in Copenhagen; he had been tutor to the Crown Prince, and had been rewarded by a grateful sovereign by appointment as the first royal historiographer. His compensation was a prelacy at Ribe Cathedral, but the sinecure was fatal and an unkind critic charged that his only achievement was his family: '*liberis quam libris procreandis aptior fuit*'. Vedel thought better of him. '*Vir prudens, gravis et in omni eruditionis generi excellens, maxime omnis antiquitatis et historiarum peritissimus*' he wrote ('a prudent and grave man, excelling in all kinds of learning and of all antiquarians and historians the most skilful'). Prudent, grave and skilful he may have

been, but Vedel wanted his job. It was promised to him, on condition that he do what Svaning had failed to do — write the continuation of Saxo.

Vedel was fairly embarked now upon his career as an historian, and he gave way to that passion for theory which was to inspire such hopes and such disappointments. To Neils Kaas he indited a long letter, 'Commentarius de scribenda historica Danica'. The historian, he said, must begin with the land and the people — the geography and climate, the towns and villages and countryside, the rivers and the harbours. He must trace the origin of the people, their migrations, their customs and morals and character, their language, the literature. His chronology must be exact, every fact in its proper place. Religion was of first importance, wars were only secondary, and the history of one nation should not be confused with that of other nations. The writing of national history, he contended, should be a national enterprise; the work should proceed by a fixed plan, and should be under the direction of a single man. He was fascinated with his own theories of history, and on loose sheets of paper he jotted down elaborations of his ideas. The historian, he wrote, has two problems — material and form (*res et verba*). As far as material is concerned, he is bound to observe the facts, for 'the soul and life of history is truth', and he must choose carefully between the significant and the insignificant. To the facts he might add his own observations, and the observations of others, and he should not refrain from judgment. As for form, the historian must write in an elegant style, but he might indulge in idioms and homely proverbs.

Meantime there were other things which distracted Vedel's attention from the great work, and besides, the appointment to the prelacy at Ribe had not yet come through. He discovered in the cloister of Soro the manuscript of Adam of Bremen's *History of the Church in the North*, solved the problem of its authorship, and brought out a new edition with learned notes on a dozen obscure subjects. He collected material for a history of Norway, he organized the chronology of Danish history, he compared the English and the Danish languages. Nor could all of his time be given to history; the demands of the court, the demands of his noble patrons, the demands of society had to be considered. Finally Svaning was removed from his position and its emoluments, and Vedel was given a canonry at the Ribe Cathedral and permitted to leave the capital to take up his duties as historiographer.

2

And now the great enterprise was about to begin, and all the auspices were favourable. Ribe lacked the resources of Copenhagen,

but was free from its distractions. The cathedral library in Bethelhem chapel housed many treasures; Vedel had secured the whole of Svaning's valuable collection of manuscripts, and his own library, he later boasted, was without equal in the whole of the North. Ribe had its men of learning, its churchmen and its scholars; and in the rich rolling country to the east and the south were the manorial estates of the first families of the kingdom. In Ribe, Vedel had all the social life that was good for him and all the quiet and isolation that he needed, and his circumstances were more than comfortable. From his father-in-law he inherited considerable property; after Maria Svaning had died he had married Mette, daughter of Canon Laugesen of the cathedral, and she had brought with her the handsome estate of Lilliebjærg, which was to have so melancholy a history. As canon and later prelate of the cathedral, and as royal historiographer, Vedel enjoyed a generous income: the clerical and the royal tithes from two parishes, and accountancy monies from over sixty churches.

So Vedel settled into Lilliebjærg and proceeded to make of it a replica of Uraniborg, for he had a sense of the fitness of things. On the old manor house he built a tower, even as Tycho Brahe had done, and from its windows he could look westward across the marshes to the North Sea, and northward over the brown and purple heath. One room of Lilliebjærg was an historical museum; here were old coins and weapons and armour, and from the walls hung paintings and maps; in another room he placed his library, rich in manuscripts, records and documents, bagged in many a hunt where everything was fair game. Over the entrance to the library was a Tabula Bibliothecae Liliomontana with the inscription *Deo ac musis sacer est hic locus*, and a body of laws, enjoining on the scholar purity in mind and morals, moderation, tolerance, and a reverence for learning, the whole bearing the signatures of nine of the most distinguished men in the kingdom — Tycho Brahe and Niels Kaas and Hans Svaning and Charles Dançey among them. Eventually Vedel added to his establishment a printing press and a printer. Everything was in readiness for the production of the great history.

Everything was ready, but Vedel was not ready. Confidently he drew up a prospectus and gave it to an eager world, but beyond this he was not prepared to go. Nothing more melancholy than this prospectus; it excited the most enthusiastic hopes and remains a symbol of non-fulfilment; for three centuries the shadow of the tower of Lilliebjærg stretched across Danish literature.

The history was to be written in twenty-two books. The first was to describe the geography of the kingdom — the natural and political boundaries, the rivers and valleys, the villages and towns and

manorial estates, the churches and cloisters. The second was to embrace ethnology, the third ethnography; in these books Vedel planned to trace the origin of the Danish peoples, their migration into Denmark, their morals and customs, as well those of the common man as of the clergy and the nobility. These books were to form the introduction to the history proper; fifteen books were to be given to the chronicle of political and military and religious events; two concluding books were to contain an exhaustive genealogy of all the Danish kings, and an exact chronology of the history of Denmark and the neighbouring kingdoms.

The essential modernity of the conception of history embodied in this plan does not need emphasis. Jean Bodin, to be sure, had anticipated Vedel in his emphasis upon geography, but though his *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem* had been published in 1566 there is no evidence that Vedel was acquainted with it; Scaliger's *Thesaurus temporum*, the first successful effort to establish a sound secular basis for chronology, did not appear until 1606. Three hundred years later the great historian, Troels-Lund, was to apply to Danish society of the sixteenth century the tests that Vedel had proposed.

Now that Vedel had announced his grandiose scheme he was filled with those forebodings that so often assail the scholar. Omniscience was his ambition and perfection his goal, and he was appalled at his own audacity. How little he knew of geography of the kingdom, how unfamiliar he was with the life of the common men and women, the farmers and fisher folk. He must know these things, directly and immediately; he abandoned Lilliebjerget and began the first of those many journeys through the country which were designed to provide a firm foundation for the history. In theory this was to give him mastery of his material; in fact he was already a fugitive.

He persuaded Tycho Brahe to provide him with instruments for surveying; he secured from the Royal Council formal authority to make surveys of the kingdom, and to collect material for his history. Soon he was a familiar figure flitting from parish to parish, from church to church. In 1586 he visited Brahe on the island Hveen, the next year he was in Copenhagen; in 1588 he made the first of his journeys through Slesvig and North Jutland, visiting the libraries of churches and cloisters, the record rooms of city halls, the private libraries of the larger manor houses. In 1589 he extended his surveys to the islands and found time to cross over to Skaane, the cathedral at Lund housed a rich collection of manuscripts, but it was the great tower that attracted him and from its eminence he drew maps of the surrounding country. The next year he was at the cathedral at Roskilde, then back to Jutland again. His collections

grew monumentally: maps by the hundred, old manuscripts, copies of church records and of town records, and sometimes the originals, so that protests were not wanting at the thoroughness with which he gutted libraries; to these he was adding epitaphs and inscriptions, popular legends, traditions, folk songs and ballads. At Uranieborg he had met the Dowager Queen, Sofia; wretchedly treated by the Council, she was finding what consolation she could in marrying off her daughters and in dalliance with the arts. She heard that Vedel had gathered some folk songs and asked to hear them, but he was not ready to make these public and promised instead an extensive collection. There were delays and promptings, but finally the volume appeared — *One Hundred Danish Songs* — and it was printed at his own press in Lilliebjerg.

It was a unique contribution to Danish and to European literature; for a century it was the most popular of Danish books, and when the indomitable Bishop Grundtvig undertook to revive Danish nationalism after the Napoleonic debacle, he turned to this medium of folk song and ballad. Vedel had a just sense of their significance: 'as for historical facts', he wrote, 'even little children know that they are not to be relied upon,' but he valued them for the revelations of the language, the customs and habits of an earlier age. 'We can read here', he said, 'the deeds and the sentiments, the moods, speech, warfare and weapons, husbandry, dress, food, marriage and funeral customs of our forefathers, and they preserve for us the strong old language, the poetry of an older age'. There were other justifications too: when sung by lovely women they bring delight; when carried by the sojourner to foreign parts they recall to him his native land; those who lie abed can read them to while away the time, and to those who languish in prison he promised that they would drive away boredom and lighten the passing hours.

But still there was no history, and the murmur of official disapproval reached his sensitive ears. Boldly he announced that the great book was all but complete: within a year it should be published. To prove his industry he printed fragments of the genealogy and the chronology; to placate those in high office he brought out an edition of his sermons and dedicated it to the Councillor Hak Ulfstand, who promptly died. An endless stream of funeral orations flowed from his facile pen, and no marriage or birth but what he contributed a poem for the occasion.

The history was all but complete. Already he had moved on to other, and larger, works. He announced a history of Norway, he announced a history of Slesvig and of Holstein, he announced a history of the Church in the North and issued a detailed prospectus; he projected a history of laws, a history of warfare, a history of the Danish nobility. He was divorced from all reality, he had entered

a dream world where ideas were the only concrete things. Zealously he collected his materials, drew up tables of contents, and with many a flourish wrote title-page and dedication for each of his many books, and the work was done.

Fifteen years the state had waited for the history, and even old Svaning began to appear industrious by contrast. Christian IV was king now; no nonsense about him, he was accustomed to having his way. Vedel's patrons were gone, Friis and Peder Oxe were dead, and Niels Grubbe and Paasjske had no influence. There were new constellations in the political heavens, new stars on the intellectual horizon.

In 1594 died Vedel's last powerful friend, Niels Kaas. Promptly Vedel was dismissed from his position and young Niels Krag, who had managed so brilliantly the matrimonial alliance between Princess Anne and James of Scotland, was appointed royal historiographer and enjoined to write the history that neither Svaning nor Vedel had been able to write. But if his predecessor had had too little energy, Krag had too much. He was invaluable, and the King could not dispense with his services. In 1597 he was sent to Poland, the following year to England, and again to Poland. Finally in 1602 he was appointed Rector of Soro Academy that he might find leisure for the history; Providence intervened and removed him from this earth, the history still unwritten.

There was still Vedel. Anger had given way to melancholy, and Mette wrote to her son that her husband seldom answered when she spoke to him, and that life was indeed sad. Vedel had not given up his plans; almost annually he announced the appearance of the long-awaited history and a score of other volumes as well. What though his kingdom was lost, all was not lost, and he retired to the ivory tower of Lilliebjerget, and looked out over the endless heath and the sea and saw visions not vouchsafed to other men. For twenty years he lived at Lilliebjerget while the dust gathered on his manuscripts and the bells of the great cathedral tolled the passing hours, and when the creators of Hamlet and Don Quixote died, he too died.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor, *The Cambridge Journal*

Sir,

If the discussion inaugurated by Mr. Bassett's article on 'The Myth of the Baldwin "Confession"', had done nothing else, it would have demonstrated Baldwin's almost unbelievable incapacity for conducting a consecutive argument. Mr. Beloff in his letter justly says that 'it is difficult to see how', in the passage he quotes, 'the "great majority" which was not to be used for "arming without a mandate" could be anything other than the "large majority" which Mr. Baldwin had won in the election of 1935'. Nevertheless Mr. Bassett is right in saying that it *is* other, and it is because his brief reply on this particular point may not entirely convince those who have not the curiosity to consult Hansard that I venture to adduce further evidence.

In his original article Mr. Bassett put Baldwin's speech in its true context, pointing out (p. 87) that he 'was dealing with the position in the years 1933 and 1934 in reply to Mr. Churchill's criticisms'. But he did not quote any of Mr. Churchill's speech, the following passage in which does not, indeed, make Baldwin's meaning *clear*, but at least shows that he did not mean what he seems to have meant, and what Mr. Beloff says he meant:

If the necessary orders for the machine tools and other measures which the Minister told us in July of this year he had taken had been put in hand before the General Election, when the Prime Minister, by all his public statements, was alive to the condition of our defences, we should have saved much more than nine months . . . I cannot understand why this was not done, and I hope that the Prime Minister, in his speech this evening, will give us some explanation. I have heard it said that the Government had no mandate for rearmament until the General Election. Such a doctrine is wholly inadmissible. The responsibility of Ministers for the public safety is absolute and requires no mandate . . . The Prime Minister had the command of enormous majorities in both Houses of Parliament ready to vote for any necessary measures of defence. The country has never yet failed to do its duty when the true facts have been put before it, and I cannot see where there is a defence for this delay.

If we put this side by side with Baldwin's reply, we see that Baldwin's main purpose is to defend his 'mandate' doctrine against Mr. Churchill's attack. The crucial words are 'had I taken such action as my right Hon. friend desired me to take': comparison with Mr. Churchill's speech makes it clear that the period in question was, as Mr. Bassett states, that before the election. Why Baldwin used the phrase 'this majority' remains a mystery. But perhaps it is a little easier to understand in the light of Mr. Churchill's insistence on the 'enormous majorities' the Government commanded in 1933-35. Baldwin is arguing that a majority, however large, does not justify action for which there is no mandate (and that, moreover, the action recommended by Mr. Churchill might have resulted in the loss of the majority itself); he may, in consequence, have come to regard 'the majority' enjoyed by the National Government as, somehow, the same entity both before and after the 1935 election. In other words, he means: 'I agree with Mr. Churchill that the Government all along had "this great majority", but the existence of a mandate makes all the difference between the pre-election and the post-election situation.' But it must be granted that he did not succeed in saying this intelligibly.

Balliol College, Oxford

Yours truly,
J. C. MAXWELL

BOOK REVIEWS

JOHN COWPER POWYS: Rabelais. *The Bodley Head, 15s. net.*

In the last few decades important advances have been made in Rabelaisian studies: accurate and well-commented texts, not to speak of authoritative biographies, have made their appearance, so that a more balanced appreciation of Rabelais's work should now be possible. Mr Powys has rightly felt that the time has come for a revaluation of Rabelais in England, and it is therefore with a feeling of eagerness that we take up his new book. It seems to him that hitherto Rabelais's work has been hidden from English readers, partly by the sins of omission and commission on the part of translators, and partly by the 'conspiracy of silence' engineered against him by the vested interests of society. To remedy this state of affairs, Mr Powys has both offered us a selection of Rabelais's writings translated by his own hand, and put forward an 'interpretation' of Rabelais's 'philosophy'. The aim of this book is thus extremely laudable and one does not need to read far in order to convince oneself of Mr Powys's enthusiasm and sincerity: even his style echoes here and there phrases and mannerisms of his author. Mr Powys would have us believe that Rabelais has a very clear message for the world today, which could go far to solve the problems that beset us: 'Pantagruelism', which he rather unconvincingly claims to have been distorted by ideological opponents, is in short the panacea for all our troubles: at its root lies *humour*, which may be considered as 'wisdom diffused through the whole circus of life'. It is an appeal to take life as it comes, instead of subjecting it to the taboos and procrustean methods of sectarianism; it is also, we are informed, an enemy of vivisection.

Now this approach to Rabelais in a book which sets out with the express purpose of attracting readers, lays itself open to various criticisms. To attempt to formulate a doctrine from Rabelais, be it only a form of humanitarianism freed from metaphysical ties, is a hazardous enterprise: it is perfectly true that beneath the work of any author lie certain 'constants', many of which may be desirable elements of a philosophy: but to transform them into a systematic code, as Mr Powys has done, would seem to many a travesty of the intentions of Rabelais. At any rate one would have preferred to see more substantial reasons brought forward to lend conviction to Mr Powys's argument. What Mr Powys has done, of course, is to give us his own philosophy and to ask Rabelais to stand bail for powysism. Now much of what Mr Powys has had to say concerning the need of a new philosophy may well earn the approval of his readers: but this is in no sense an introduction to Rabelais; and indeed this idea has crossed Mr Powys's mind: 'Am I in all I am saying about Rabelais's religion merely analysing my own reactions to the reading of his books?'

But even if we admit that Mr Powys is warranted in extracting this doctrine from Rabelais, he has in fact limited Rabelais to 'Pantagruelism', and though he has several times attacked those who 'place Rabelais, by means of various bibliophilic and gastronomic "nods and becks and wreathed smiles" within the elect and recondite purlieus of those superior arcana of aesthetic sophistication permitted only to the wealthy and the travelled' (p. 9. cf., also p. 379), he has himself stated that, whereas 'Pantagruelism' is a doctrine which can and should be appreciated by our sick world today, Rabelais is in fact *not* accessible to all: 'I have a shrewd suspicion that to be a real lover of Rabelais three things are required; a mania for gnomic and enigmatic soothsayings in the Greek tongue, a mania for classical mythology, and a good thick strain of peasant blood' (p. 390).

Yet, were we satisfied with this reduction of Rabelais to the philosophy outlined by Mr Powys, could we in all sincerity approve the vocabulary used by him to

convince us of the urgency of Rabelais's message? To credit Rabelais with 'megalo-saurian burlesquing of babyhood', 'planetary boyishness', 'planetary profundity', to call him the 'God-Child', the 'pagan-christian-polytheist', 'a life-worshipper, a life-analyser, a life-apotheosizer', to describe his soul as 'that wavering congeries of contrarities, that cosmogonic Squid of strung-along reciprocities', to characterize his style as 'this peripatetic, periphrastic patter, which appears to be the philosophical accompaniment we are likely to get to our passing from the Sign *Pisces* into the Sign *Aquarius*': all this will scarcely help to swell the ranks of Rabelais-lovers. On the other hand, more pleasure will be felt by a perusal of the passages translated by Mr Powys, whose principle therein has been to follow — horresco referens — the 'phyhic smell, if I may say so, and the intimate *physical taste*' of the original: and so he has tried to avoid being too long-winded (as is Urquhart in his opinion), too Addisonian like W. F. Smith, too modern like Putnam. The result is a very agreeable translation with some felicitous *trouvailles*. At the same time it is often very free, so that phrases are here telescoped, there expanded in a manner which in the detail might arouse comment (Pleurera-je? disoit-il = " 'Shall I howl?' groaned he"; au demeurant le meilleur filz du monde = for the rest a prince of good sports; etc.). This results at times in the slowing of the tempo of the translation. But it is surely this section of the book which will attract readers to Rabelais.

I. D. MCFARLANE

COUNT CARLO SFORZA: Italy and Italians, translated by Edward Hutton. *Frederick Muller*, 12s. 6d. net.

Sforza may be a better Foreign Minister for being able to write this sort of book, but the book itself will add nothing to his reputation. Some scrappy lecture notes have been hastily re-shuffled into something which still reads too much like a bad speech or a sermon. It skims over the surface of Italian life, well larded with discursive comment, more like the drift of a disjointed conversation than the argument of a book, mixing what is common sense with what is commonplace. It may be this form, or it may be the author's long exile away from his country, which prevents him taking us under the surface of Italy; or it may be the recurrent undertone of personal grievance and national humiliation. All his twenty and more books were written after the age of fifty, while he was an anti-fascist expatriate, most of them in French and English. In this as in the others he is still defending himself against those who depreciate his own not very important part in Italian politics. He is still defending *Italiotta* against the fascists, and Italy against the world — against the 'idiotic hatred of Italy' possessed by the English tourist with his Baedeker, or against the Allies for their 'far too slow' invasion of Italy in 1943, or against those Italians who asked, 'are we not too old? Is it not now the fated turn of the young and fresh German race?'

Such indignation may be righteous, but it plays havoc with the study of politics and history. Since the fascists appropriated the glories of ancient Rome, Sforza must magnify the Greek elements in Italian history almost to the exclusion of *Romanità*. Since Germany is barbarous, the barbarian invasions cannot be allowed to have left any mark on Italy, nor even the Norman or Spanish occupations of the South. For the same reason Napoleon is said to have 'rendered the most precious service to Italy by destroying the Holy Roman Empire'. Coupled with such unscholarly patriotism comes all manner of loose generalizations, the more remarkable from so pragmatic a statesman. 'The political revival of the Italians in the 19th century was due to one fact: the French Revolution . . . On the other hand our spiritual and internal renaissance was all our own work.' 'Unity and independence remained during four centuries of servitude and invasion the dream of all hearts.' 'Italy was in advance because her Catholicity

and Renaissance had instilled in her an instinctive Universal sentiment far stronger than was to be found anywhere else.' While Germany suffered from a 'diseased nationalism', Italy was great because she had a 'human message for the whole world'; and as for fascism, why, other nations in our shoes would probably have been much worse.

With all this there are occasional shrewd and illuminating remarks, especially where one senses the more authentic note of personal or family experience. His comparison of Italy with China strikes this note, and so does his story of the aged Manzoni, fervent Catholic that he was, defying clerical sanction to vote for Rome as the new capital of Italy. It will also surprise many students of Giolitti to learn from his one-time colleague how he used to read the Bible in bed almost every night. These rare personal remarks are the most valuable part of Sforza's book, but even in his literary and historical judgments, when he ceases to talk down to his audience, he shows that he can rise above unsubstantial debating points and secondhand commonplaces which he and others have so often written before. On his favourite subject of regionalism, for instance, after an unconvincing attempt to find 'Genoese qualities' common to Columbus, Mazzini and Mameli, he makes the good remark that 'the books in which traces are preserved of the ties maintained by the author with his native province have a better chance of survival than those in which we find only a nationalized Rome or Milan'. On Gioberti he has the interesting comment that 'his head was bursting with too much reading which prevented him from having any original ideas of his own'. About the Tuscan peasants he says, 'that word *pazienza* is like the seal [segno!] of the storied wisdom of a people that carries on its shoulders the far-off civilization of the Etruscans'. This is wise, even if not profoundly wise; it is at least not mere book wisdom. The same can be said of his remark on the totalitarian myths. 'Intellectually they did more harm to Germany, because the Germans were stupid and servile enough to take them seriously. Morally they did more harm to Italy because too many Italian workmen made a show of believing what they were told, while making fun of it in secret. Bad faith destroys more than does stupidity.' But not often is this book so much to the point.

It remains to say that the translation is unnecessarily bad. True, the clipped sentences are, like the lack of sustained argument between them, due to the author and his lecture notes. But what are we to say to the translation of *galleria* always as gallery, and *miseria* as misery, or the spelling of *chitta* for *città*? Many infelicities are due to this adoption of the nearest English equivalent to the exact Italian word order: for example, 'among the many moral miseries of the French there was this, that they exacted dithyrambs and not for our art'; or 'the book met the fate that it could not but have'. Since Sforza quotes from Binchy without giving his page reference, the translator thinks he is absolved from looking up the original. It is an instructive lesson in the responsibilities of translators to compare p. 77 of the English edition with p. 155 of the Italian and with pp. 69-70 of Binchy's *Church and State in Fascist Italy*; 'watch over' becomes 'sorvegliare', which is then put back into English with the completely altered sense of 'overlook', and all within quotation marks.

It may be that there is a danger of taking too seriously what in a lesser man might be called a pot-boiler. But all tendentiousness and inaccuracy, however slight, must be fought wherever they appear and in proportion as they are backed by great names. In this case the reader must be warned against Sforza's repeated claim that he hates generalizations and intends to let facts speak for themselves, for the author is himself a victim of what he calls 'our two most deadly enemies: nationalistic vanity and literary over-emphasis'. It is positively dangerous in a Foreign Minister to think that 'the Italians are too intelligent to go against history', or that 'if the Italians so will it, our South . . . can become one of the richest countries in Europe' — this voluntarist heresy has already done harm

enough in Italian history. The best, and the worst, that can be said of him is that his intentions are good. The impression remains that he would be more *simpatico* to converse with than to listen to. And one must admire his steadfast belief in Mazzini's concept of United Europe — like the Tuscan proverb (the point of which is quite missed by the translator), 'tutto il mondo è paese'.

D. MACK SMITH

JOHN ELDRED HOWARD: *Parliament and Foreign Policy in France*. Cresset Press, 10s. 6d. net.

This little book of 172 pages, originally a thesis for an Oxford B.Litt. degree, has as its sub-title 'A Study of the Origins, Nature and Methods of the Parliamentary Control of Foreign Policy in France during the Third Republic with special reference to the period from 1919 to 1939'. In fact, apart from the introductory chapters, it is almost entirely concerned with an examination of parliamentary control during the period between the two world wars, when the French public showed much greater interest in external affairs than it had during the earlier years of the Third Republic. Largely based on the writings of French constitutional historians and jurists such as the late M Joseph-Barthélemy, it will be of considerable use to anyone studying the general problems of control over foreign policy or the particular forms of control exercised or attempted in France. After a brief and effective introduction about the general problem of control in a democracy Mr Howard discusses the legal and historical basis of parliamentary control provided by the 'constitution' of 1875 and gives a lucid analysis of the general control exercised by the Chambers and of the role of the Committees of Foreign Affairs. There are also chapters on the ratification of treaties, the initiation of war and the 'foundations of control'. In this last the author examines the part played by the electorate and the motives which give foreign policy a particular direction. These are perhaps the most interesting aspects of his subject and the ones which would most repay fuller treatment. As it is, in his preface Mr Howard tells us that the book should have been published in 1940, and that, were he writing this chapter today, he would 'emphasize more strongly the importance of the cleavage between Left and Right in French domestic politics'. It is to be hoped that in any second edition he will modify the book accordingly, taking account of such studies as Micaud's *The French Right and Nazi Germany*. It would also be useful if he provided a brief discussion of the value for his subject of the various memoirs of eminent politicians of the Third Republic which have recently begun to appear. In his bibliographical note he complains of a shortage of memoirs; but before long it is only too likely that the souvenirs of the notables of the French Republic between 1919 and 1939 will be numerous enough to fill several shelves.

J. P. T. BURY

M. V. WOODGATE: *Madame Swetchine*. Browne and Nolan, 8s. 6d. net.

Sophia Soymonof was born in Moscow in 1782, and at the age of seventeen was married, by her shrewd father, to a Russian general of German extraction. He was twenty-five years older than she was, but in time she acquired real affection for him. She died in 1857, having lived partly in Russia and partly in France during the epic years of the French Revolution, the Napoleonic Empire, the revolutions of 1830 and 1848, and the Crimean War which she inevitably regarded as a sort of civil war between her two countries. The country of her adoption treated her much better than the country of her birth: for whereas she was brought, via her husband's post as Provisional Governor of St Petersburg, into the court life of Paul I, then expelled from the capital by a capricious Czar,

then restored to favour by his successor Alexander, then expelled again by a plot against her husband, she made for herself in Paris not only a new home but a famous and influential *salon* which rivalled that of Madame Récamier herself. To it came people like Sainte-Beuve, Joseph de Maistre, Montalambert, Lacordaire and even de Tocqueville.

It is in this last connection that her chief historical importance lies, and it has served to attract several French biographers and editors: particularly Comte Alfred de Falloux, who in 1863-64 edited her letters and journal and wrote the authoritative story of her life. The Russian exiles of the early nineteenth century were not only the Herzens and the men of the revolutionary Left, but also the victims of court factions and intrigues. Madame Swetchine represents outstandingly the exiles of the Right, and she was converted from the Orthodox to the Roman Church and became the *confidante* of Père Lacordaire and the ultra-clerical royalists.

Miss Woodgate, writing the first English biography of this very remarkable woman, brings out admirably these aspects of her historical significance. But she does more — and it was well worth doing. She demonstrates the shot-silk quality of her character and the acuteness of both her intellect and her intelligence. She shows the dominant place of religious emotion and belief in her whole life: and we are left marvelling at a woman who, in the midst of conversion, and in recurrent physical pain, could tackle undaunted all twenty-four volumes of Fleury's *Ecclesiastical History* and, when teased for her undertaking by de Maistre, embark on reading also the elaborate refutations of Fleury which de Maistre had jocularly suggested.

DAVID THOMSON

AN APPROACH TO CHRISTOLOGY

By A. R. Vine, M.A., D.D., B.Sc.

The first part of this book endeavours to do justice to Nestorius, and to interpret his prolix and obscure work *The Bazaar of Heracleides*. Though agreeing that Nestorius was rightly condemned, the author shows that his ideas were tending to a metaphysic and Christology of great subtlety and power.

The second part considers the problem of the Person of Jesus Christ in its modern setting, and shows how an orthodox Christology can be logically and consistently maintained in the context of contemporary knowledge. A concise sketch is given of the Universe and of man's place within it, and the significance of Jesus Christ in the natural order and in the fulfilment of eternal purpose is clearly shown.

While the first part is concerned with the intricacies of the Christology of the Conciliar period, the second part is of prime importance to all who wish to relate their faith to modern physics, biology, psychology and cosmology.

Large crown 8vo. 492 pp. Cloth boards

21/- net

From all Booksellers

INDEPENDENT PRESS LTD.
Memorial Hall, Faringdon Street
London, E.C.4

The Publishers of the PHAIDON ART BOOKS

*invite those interested
in their publications
to write for an*

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE

*which will be sent
free of charge*

1949

THE PHAIDON PRESS
London: 1 Cromwell Pl., S.W. 7

BOOKS RECEIVED

The inclusion of any book in this list does not preclude its review in a later issue

- A. ASPINALL: *Politics and the Press, c. 1780-1859. Home & Van Thal, 42s. net.*
 W. G. BEBBINGTON: *The Original Manuscript of Thomas Hardy's The Trumpet Major, a Study with photographs. Luff & Sons Ltd., Windsor, 2s. net.*
 ERIC BENTLEY: *The Modern Theatre, A Study of Dramatists and Drama. Robert Hale, 12s. 6d. net.*
 BOOK HANDBOOK, *An illustrated quarterly, 1948, No. 7. H. F. and G. Witherby, 2s. 6d. net.*
 A. C. BOUQUET: *Hinduism. Hutchinson's University Library, 7s. 6d. net.*
 AGATHA H. BOWLEY: *Modern Child Psychology. Hutchinson's University Library, 7s. 6d. net.*
 DAVID CECIL: *Poets and Story-Tellers, A Book of Critical Essays. Constable, 10s. net.*
 JOHN HAROLD CLAPHAM 1873-1946, *Fellow, Tutor and Vice-Provost, A Memoir prepared by direction of the Council of King's College, Cambridge. 3s. 6d. net.*
 G. COWPER: *Why Was I Born? Wayside Press, 2s. 6d. net.*
 A. K. CROSTON: *Two Seventeenth Century Prefaces. University Press of Liverpool: Hodder & Stoughton, 3s. 6d. net.*
 C. B. FIRTH: *Constance Louisa Maynard, Mistress of Westfield College, a family portrait. Allen & Unwin, 18s. net.*
 JOHN FLETCHER: *Rollo Duke of Normandy, or the Bloody Brother, A Tragedy, Attributed to John Fletcher, George Chapman, Ben Jonson and Philip Massinger. edited by J. D. Jump. University Press of Liverpool: Hodder & Stoughton, 15s. net.*

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

- GRAHAM HOUGH: Professor of English Literature, Raffles College, Singapore.
 D. MACK SMITH: Fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge.
 R. R. BOLGAR: King's College, Cambridge.
 HENRY STEELE COMMAGER: Professor of History, Columbia University.

THE CAMBRIDGE JOURNAL is published by Bowes & Bowes Publishers Limited; articles for publication, and books for review, should be submitted to the General Editor, The Cambridge Journal, 1 and 2 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Telephone, Cambridge 55488). While every care is taken for the safe-keeping of MSS submitted, the publishers cannot accept responsibility in the event of loss.

The annual subscription to THE CAMBRIDGE JOURNAL is 30s. post free. Subscriptions may be entered through all the leading booksellers and newsagents, or they may be sent direct to the publishers, Bowes and Bowes Publishers Limited, 2 Trinity Street, Cambridge.

Communications regarding advertising in THE CAMBRIDGE JOURNAL should be addressed to Richmond Towers Limited, Advertisement Agents, 1 Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1 (Telephone Museum 1794-5).